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Im Geist der Gegenwart: The Speculative Method of the

Art Historian Fritz Burger

by

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Art Historian Fritz Burger

**Approved by
Supervising Committee:**

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Dedicated to Erandi de Silva

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Between the outbreak of World War I and the mid-1930s, the best-selling and most widely read book on the topic of modern art in Germany was written by the art historian Fritz Burger (1877–1916). Burger is now all but forgotten in the art historiography of the period and absent in the English literature. This thesis provides the first English interpretation of Burger's major works and seeks to locate his art historical method in relation to then-contemporary intellectual streams. Trained in the late 19th century, Burger largely rejected the cultural-historical studies and theories of stylistic development and embraced an artistic-critical model forwarded by neo-Kantians like Adolf Hildebrand and Konrad Fiedler. Beginning with Burger's texts *Cézanne und Hodler* (1913) and *Einführung in die Moderne Kunst* (1917), I examine the conceptual underpinnings of these works with particular attention to Burger's notions of color, artistic cognition and philosophical speculation. I consider Burger's written output as the complement to his hands-on pedagogical technique at the University of Munich, his involvement with the Munich avant-garde and friendship with the artist Wassily Kandinsky. Burger's work is a rare and early attempt to write about contemporary art as an historical document but without recourse to artistic biography or cultural milieu as interpretive tools.

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Introduction

For the most part one is content to register art works, classifying them through specific categories as defined by biographies, epochs or the concept of style. We attempt to establish value judgments from these so-called historical relationships, ones that often have little if anything to do with the art works themselves. In an odd turn, it becomes customary to regard this hierarchy of art works as a rigorously objective treatment, to confuse the perceptual and working principles of the archive and cultural history with those appropriate to art.¹

This quotation, from Fritz Burger's 1913 book, *Cézanne und Hodler*, is a challenge to prevailing art historical methodologies, a call to return art history's task to the domain of art. Burger's cutting words also demand an alternative. How should an art historical methodology be grounded when unhinged from a history of stylistic and cultural development? In establishing a methodology, what aspects of art historical treatment should be considered *appropriate* to art itself? This is a question the art historian Fritz Burger sought to answer during his short career and one that preoccupied art historians of the generations before and after him. In this thesis, the largely unknown writing of the Munich art historian Fritz Burger (b. 1877 Munich, d. 1916 Verdun) are recovered through a careful reading and critical evaluation of his work and I attempt to situate Burger's thought and writings within its contemporary milieu in order to produce a preliminary comparative analysis of methodological tendencies in Germany in the 1910s. Fritz Burger approached the work of art with what Albert Brinckman called "a subjectivity of the highest power," an unusual position considering art historians' more

¹Fritz Burger, *Cézanne und Hodler*, (Munich: Piper, 1913), 7. "Man benützt sich zumeist mit der Registrierung, der Einordnung des Kunstwerks in bestimmte, durch Persönlichkeiten, Epochen oder Stilbegriffe umschriebene Kategorien und sucht aus den sog. historischen Beziehungen sich Werturteile zu verschaffen, die mit dem Kunstwerk selbst wenig oder gar nichts zu tun haben. Man pflegt diese an sich sehr wichtige Ordnung der Kunstwerke merkwürdiger Weise für eine objektivwissenschaftliche Betrachtung der Kunst zu halten und verwechselt die gewissermaßen bibliothekarische oder die kulturhistorische Arbeits- und Erkenntnisweise mit der künstlerische."

typical aspirations to objectivity and rigor. Thus this thesis is written with the hope that it might nuance the understanding of our own methodological origins and reveal the agonistic forces at the root of the discipline.²

Burger's name is now unfamiliar, but in his time he was considered a colleague and scholar on par with Wilhelm Worringer, Heinrich Wölfflin, Hans Tietze, and Max Dvorak, among others. As a young academic he produced two book manuscripts, *Cézanne und Hodler* (1913) and *Einführung in die Moderne Kunst* (1917), both of which were critically well received and, moreover, very widely read in Germany. In short, his reputation was as an important contributor to a discipline still uncertain of its tasks and methods. In critical review, his work on modern art produced up until 1913 was described as being “of undeniable importance ... the first attempt at a truly synthetic consideration of contemporary art since Meier-Graefe's *Entwicklungsgeschichte* published a decade ago.”³ Julius Meier-Graefe himself described Burger's work as the product of a “subtle mind.”⁴ And in the same year, Hans Tietze placed Burger alongside Worringer and at the

² Albert Brinckmann, “Afterword,” *Einführung in die Moderne Kunst*, (Berlin-Neubabelsberg: akademische Verlagsgesellschaft Athenaion, 1916), 135: “Statt als Historiker zu objektivieren, subjektiverte er (Burger) mit höchste kraft. Er schuf den Typ des wissenschaftlichen Expressionisten...” [Instead of working with objectivity as an historian, he worked with subjectivity of the highest power. He created the character (or type) of the scholarly Expressionist...]

³ Ipse Peccator, “Die Kunst der Gegenwart,” in *Güldenammer* III no. 11 (August 1913): 697. “Das Werk Burgers [hat] eine unleugbare Wichtigkeit ... Burgers Arbeit ist seit Meier-Graefes *Entwicklungsgeschichte*, die vor einem Jahrzehnt herauskam, ... der erste Ansatz zu einer synthetischen Betrachtung lebender Kunst.”

⁴ Quoted in Rolf Hauck, “Fritz Burger 1877-1916,” (PhD dissertation, University of Munich, n.d.), 103. “Im Oktober 1913...adressierte Burger über zweithausend Teilnehmer mit den Thesen: “Über die junge Kunst der Gegenwart und die Wissenschaft.” [On October 1913, Burger addressed over 2000 participants with his thesis, “Over recent art of the contemporary and science.”] The original speech published as follows: “Über die junge Kunst der Gegenwart und die Wissenschaft” in *Freideutsch Jugend*, “Zur Jahrhundertfeier auf dem Hohen Meißner,” (Jena: 1913), 51-57.

vanguard of new, synthetic art historical methodologies in his book *Die Methode der Kunstgeschichte*.⁵ Writes Tiezte:

This line of art historical interpretation—from Hegel and Riegl to Worringer and Burger—is without doubt of great worth. Because they clearly show us, as cultural-historical considerations only in the narrowest sense, which intellectual forces were actively woven into times and, through the art, what spheres of thought are present behind form.⁶

Even seven years after Burger's death, Robert Hedicke aligned Burger's methodological inquiry with that of Ernst Heidrich, Max Dvorák and Wilhelm Pinder as part of the “*neue Bewegung*” in art history, an impassioned and expressionist turning away from the cool and rigorous method of Jakob Burckhardt and his followers.⁷ Hedicke also praises Burger's teaching techniques although adding a gentle warning, that art historians must take care “not to become Expressionist painters.”⁸ As far as Burger's pedagogical notoriety is to be considered, he was well known at the University of Munich and beyond as a popular and “inflammatory orator,” whose courses attracted hundreds of

⁵ Hans Tietze, *Die Methode der Kunstgeschichte*, (1913; New York: Lenox Hill Pub., 1973), 442. “So ist diese Art der kunstgeschichtlichen Interpretation von Hegel und Riegl bis Worringer und Burger dennoch ohne Zweifel von grossen Wert. Denn sie zeigt uns deutlicher als die kulturgeschichtliche Betrachtung in engeren Sinne, welche gestigen Kraefte am Webstuhl der Zeit taetig waren und welche Gedankenwelt hinter der Gestaltung durch die Kunst stand.”

⁶ For broader discussion of the connection between Worringer and Burger, see Tiezte's chapter “Konstruktion der Zusammenhänge,” literally “Construction of Connections” in Hans Tiezte, *Die Methode der Kunstgeschichte*, 406-427.

⁷ Robert Hedicke, *Methodenlehre der Kunstgeschichte*, (Strassburg: J.H. ED Heitz, 1924), 151. “Die geistesgeschichtliche Bewegung in der jüngeren Generation der Kunsthistoriker tritt uns besonders in Ernst Heidrich, Max Dvorak, Wilhelm Pinder und Fritz Burger entgegen....” [The intellectual-historical movement of the young generation of art historians is found particularly with Ernst Heidrich, Max Dvorak, Wilhelm Pinder and Fritz Burger.] To be associated with Pinder, who became involved with the Nazi party in the 1930s and lent academic credence to racist cultural myths of Germanic genesis, is a rather onerous distinction. Discussion of Burger's own stance regarding questions of national characteristics and tendencies will be treated in the final section of chapter one thesis.

⁸ For Hedicke's word of warning against young art historians become Expressionist painters see, Robert Hedicke, 132. “Burger hat mit seinen Schülern Originale vieler Zeiten und vieler Schulen kopiert, um an diesen Kopien farben zu studieren. Das ist gewiß eine höchste fruchtbare Methode, von der reiche kunsthistorische technische Farbenerkenntnis zu erwarten ist. Nur muß sich der farbenstudierende Kunsthistoriker durchaus hüten, dabei Künstler zu werden und darf nicht etwa Expressionist werden...”

students above capacity.⁹ As a passionate supporter of the Expressionist artists, Burger's writings are comprehensible only in light of his demand that art history commit itself to the study of contemporary art on an international scale. Briefly before his enlistment in World War One, Burger addressed over two thousand listeners at the University of Munich, speaking on the problems and necessity of producing a rigorous consideration of the contemporary period. After Burger's death at the battle of Verdun in March of 1916, Heinrich Wölfflin himself addressed the students and faculty of the University, lauding Burger's academic achievements and commitment to his artistic milieu. Obituaries in *Die Rheinland* and *Frankfurter Zeitung* echo Wölfflin's sentiment.¹⁰

But reputations fade. And those who might consider that the ideas and authors most vitally engaged with their era and useful to our own will be successfully preserved in intellectual histories might consider Burger's current obscurity. Due to both chance occurrences and shifts in intellectual climate, history has not sustained Burger the way it has his notable colleague at the University of Munich, Heinrich Wölfflin (1864–1945), or the author of *Abstraktion und Einfühlung*, Wilhelm Worringer (1881–1965). To date the only notable mention of Burger found in the English language literature remains a short treatment in Christopher Wood's introduction to the *Vienna School Reader*.¹¹ Burger's absence in English language historiography is in part due to the unavailability of his work

⁹ See Liane Burckhardt, "...bei aller Wissenschaftlichkeit, lebendig... zu einzelnen Positionen des Kunsthistorikers Fritz Burgers (1877-1916)," *Kunstchronik* 4 (April 1998): 169: "Laut Frequenzliste waren beispielsweise im Wintersemester 1910 für sechs Lehrangebote Burgers 726!" "For example, according to the attendance lists in the Winter semester of 1910, 726 students were enrolled for Burger's six courses."

¹⁰ Archives of the University of Munich, quoted in Hauck, 113.

¹¹ See Christopher Wood, ed., *The Vienna School Reader*, (New York: Zone Books, 2000), 30. For appearance in the German literature, see: Peter Bethausen, ed., *Metzler Kunsthistoriker Lexicon: 210 Porträts deutschsprachiger Autoren aus vier Jahrhunderten* (J.B. Metzler: Stuttgart, 2007), 45; Matthias Müller-Lentrod, "Subjektivieren mit höchster Kraft: Carl Einstein und Fritz Burger," in *Die visuelle Wende der Moderne*, Klaus Kiefer, ed. (Fink: Munich, 2003), 64-78; Burckhardt, 169-173.

in translation. In German literature Burger has also been largely overlooked, however a number of recent citations indicate some interest in the recovery of this methodologically experimental period exists. In Peter Betthausen's *Metzler Kunsthistoriker Lexicon*, Burger receives mention for “taking an important place among that small phalanx of art historians who first vehemently applied themselves to the study of modern art” and the author states quite adamantly that the latter's central methodological tenants remain viable.¹² In his contribution to a 2003 essay collection on the critic and writer Carl Einstein, Matthias Müller-Lentrodts finds reason to compare Einstein to Burger for their expressionist turn from traditional scholarship, a shared approach without extant biographical connection.¹³ Müller-Lentrodts's contribution is particularly interesting as he explores the issue of the writer's subjectivity in Burger and Einstein's writings as well as the risk of approaching contemporary art “intuitively” in response to the artists' own abandonment of traditional means and tools.

Burger has also been treated in three German language dissertations, although only one takes a general account of his writings while the other two focus exclusively on

¹² Betthausen, ed., 45: "...In der kleinen Phalanx der Kunsthistoriker, die sich als erste vehement für die neue Kunst des frühen 20. Jahrhunderts einsetzen, nimmt Burger einen wichtiger Platz ein...";

¹³ Ibid., 67: "...die beide durch den expressionistischen Aufbruch, durch die leidenschaftliche Gestigkeit einer erneuerungswilligen Kunstbewegung geprägt wurden, die sich aber weder persönlich gekannt haben noch in geistigen Austausch mit einander sind, erhält aber vielleicht eine gewisse Berechtigung insofern, als dass beide in verwandeter Weise expressives künstlerisches Temperament und wissenschaftlichen Schafsinn in sich vereinten und darüber hinaus ein vergleichbar intensives Interesse für die Probleme der modernen Malerei und großes Engagement für die Kunst der Gegenwart zeigten." [both can be characterized by their expressionist departure, through the passionate spiritedness of an art movement yearning for renewal, though they were neither personally acquainted nor in intellectual exchange with each other (the comparison) is justified in so far as both were united in their expressive artistic temperament and a scholarly sharpness of thought and, moreover, the comparable intensity of their interest in the problems of modern painting and great engagement with contemporary art.]

the nationalist overtones of Burger's final work.¹⁴ While Rolf Hauck and Matthias Müller-Lentrodts consider Burger's work to be innovative in its consideration of contemporary art and artistic technique, Burger more often appears only as a small footnote in the history of nationalist aesthetic discourse shortly before the First World War. Thus even in German language histories of the discipline, "his life's work remains, in part due to his early death during the first World War, only a byword in academic circles and largely unknown until today."¹⁵

Although an early death has condemned more than one writer to obscurity, that history has since turned away from Fritz Burger would come as a surprise to the fifty thousand readers who purchased his posthumously published text, *Einführung in die Moderne Kunst*, between 1917 and 1931.¹⁶ Burger's other two major books, his guide to the Schack Gallery in Munich and his 1913 work, *Cézanne und Hodler* were comparably received by a generally wide audience. The *Einführung's* nearly fifty thousand-copy circulation should be considered an enormous success for the era, particularly given the book's academic subject and young author. Featuring dozens of black-and-white and color illustrations, Burger discusses painting, sculpture and architecture from the mid-19th century onward and includes works by artists then active in Germany such as Wassily Kandinsky, Franz Marc and Alexei Jawelensky as well as works by Matisse, Picasso,

¹⁴ For dissertation work that has considered Burger see: Hans Dieter Erbsmehl, "Kulturkritik und Gegenästhetik: Zur Bedeutung Friedrich Nietzsches für die bildende Kunst in Deutschland, 1892-1918" (Los Angeles: UCLA, 1993); Liane Burckhardt, "Kunstwissenschaft zwischen Fach- und Berufsprofilierung" (Munich: Zentral Institute für Kunstgeschichte, 1996); and Rolf Hauck, "Fritz Burger 1877-1916," (PhD dissertation, University of Munich, n.d.).

¹⁵ Müller-Lentrodts, 66. "Trotz zahlreicher Veröffentlichungen und sein aufregend akademischen Lehrtätigkeit bleibt sein Lebenswerk, bedingt im Teil wegen seinen frühen Tod während des Ersten Weltkrieges, unvollendet bekannt bis heute nur noch in Fachkreisen ein Begriff."

¹⁶ Hauck, 5.

Cézanne, and Kokoschka. Burger's *Einführung* certainly served as a voice for modern art during the late teens and twenties in Germany and was heard by a reading public within and without the discipline. Only six years after the *Einführung*'s last printing this public would also be witness to the Nazi Party's condemnation of avant-garde tendencies in the Degenerate Art exhibition of 1937. Thus it is worth asking how Burger's book found an audience and what criteria he established for viewing and understanding modern art that sets him apart from the practitioners with whom we are already familiar. In addition to its critical appraisal, the sheer popularity of Burger's writing among readers speaks to its significance in developing our own understanding of this volatile and experimental period in art history's history.

As a time of experimentation and reconsideration of the criteria of art history, the current position of the discipline might be compared to the one in which Fritz Burger was writing. In Burger's time art history was distinct from, but inseparably linked to, the adjacent fields of philology, aesthetics, history, archaeology and natural science. As a field whose practitioners negotiated between the methods of these disciplines, Hans Tietze notes in 1913 that "although art history has ostensibly gained a respectable position, internally it has remained the Cinderella of the academy ... each of these disciplines have extolled their claim upon it."¹⁷ In the last forty years, art historical

¹⁷ Tietze, 100. "Was Conze 1869 über die Archäologie sagte... gilt heute noch für die Kunstgeschichte; äußerlich hat sie eine ansehnlich Position erlangt innerlich ist sie das Aschenbrödel unter den Wissenschaften geblieben, als das sie am Anfang ihrer Universitätslaufbahn bezeichnet worden ist ... Stoff und Methode stellen sie zwischen Geschichte und Ästhetik, Philologie und Naturwissenschaft und jede dieser Disziplinen hat Anspruch auf sie erhoben." [What Conze said in 1869 with regard to archaeology ... is still true today for art history; ostensibly it has achieved an acceptable position, internally it has remained the Cinderella of the disciplines, just as it was identified as the beginning of its University career ... material and method place it between history and aesthetics, philology and natural sciences, and each of

methodology has been dramatically restructured due to the grafting of theories originating outside the discipline. Under the umbrella of post-structuralism, methods and theories originating in psychoanalysis, deconstructivism, linguistics and feminist thought have radically altered the discourse of the discipline, shifting what art historians have come to regard as appropriate to the study of art itself and opening and closing lines of discursive thought and writing. Thus the study of art history's origins, and in particular its early confrontations with the problem of producing a history of the contemporary, may be relevant in a time in which a heterogeneity of methodological tacks seem to have splintered the very object of study.

Discussion of Fritz Burger's own contribution to art history begins with the synopsis and analysis of three of his major texts: Burger's *Die Schack Galerie* (Guide to the Schack Galerie; 1912), *Cézanne und Hodler*, and *Einführung in die Moderne Kunst*. Because Burger died before completing what he believed would be his major contribution to the field, a twenty volume series entitled *Systematik der Kunstwissenschaft*, his work does not contain a fully developed methodological framework.¹⁸ The fragmentary nature of his output encourages its treatment as a series of conceptual developments framed within the historical circumstances of the publications' production. These conceptual turns include the question of national origin, the epistemological status of the artist, and what Burger names the "Color Problem," among others. I also focus on what Jens Kräubig has discussed as a shift in his work, a "break" with the University's

these disciplines has extolled its claim upon it.]

¹⁸ Rolf Hauck also discusses the problem in describing a "method" based on Burger's writings. See Hauck, 63.

Wissenschaftlich doxa towards a more prophetic, mystic style of interpretation evidenced in passages of the *Einführung*.¹⁹

Next I outline Burger's work and reputation at the University of Munich, where he served as a *Privatdozent*, or adjunct faculty member, from 1907 until his enlistment in the war in 1916. To establish the importance of contemporary art in the formulation of Burger's methodology, I address his personal involvement with the *Blaue Reiter* group and the artists Franz Marc and Wassily Kandinsky as well as Burger's speculative studio-program for art historians at the University. For Burger, an art historian's inability to confront contemporary art movements would prevent a self-reflexive understanding of the limits of art historical interpretations. For Burger, art historical work, *like art*, was the product of a historically delimited subject, a conviction he extended into his teaching and lectures.²⁰

Finally, the question of Burger's disappearance from art history must be addressed. After establishing the general tenets of Burger's methods and thought, it will be useful to work comparatively to understand why Burger's work, despite its popular success, may or may not have had a use value to following generations of art historians and artists. I argue that Burger's disappearance is not merely a case of unfortunate circumstances. His art historical method, emphasis on contemporary art and his insistence

¹⁹ Jens Kraubig, "Der Kunsthistoriker Fritz Burger 1877-1916," Text from a speech given at the Kurpfälzischen Museum of Heidelberg (Heidelberg: Art History Institute at the University of Heidelberg, 1987): 1. "Without question, it was no later than 1915 when Burger broke completely with "science" [*Wissenschaft*]."

²⁰ In the forward to *Cézanne und Hodler* Burger writes, "Hierbei war der Gedanke leitend, daß wir Kunsthistoriker nicht immer bloß untersuchen sollen, wie die geschichtliche Erkenntnis für die der Gegenwart zu verwerthen sei, sondern welche Erkenntnisse uns die Gegenwart für die Beurteilung der Vergangenheit vermittelt." [Here the commanding thought was that the art historian shouldn't simply examine how the knowledge of the past is to be judged by the present, but rather how the present mediates our own knowledge when judging the past.]

upon the understanding of artistic technique was fundamentally at odds with prevailing scholarly practice.²¹ As his colleague Wölfflin explained in his tepid evaluation of Burger's work in 1915: "Up until now I have advocated the opinion, that in methodological respects, Dr. Burger leaves too much to be desired ... He is hardworking, of a great enterprising spirit.... honestly moved to make new points of view useful to art history ... but these advantages must be weighed against a palpable lack of scholarly discipline." In a word, Wölfflin found Burger's method "*unwissenschaftlich*."²²²³

I end this text with a formative attempt to locate Burger from within the discipline, to understand how his speculative, intuitive method might link up with later methodological searches and to understand why his writing has been largely forgotten today. Burger was trained as an architect and art historian and throughout his writing makes innumerable references to the art historical methods employed by the

²¹ Burckhardt, 169-173. "*Fritz Burger, vor gut einem Jahrhundert am 10. September 1877 in Muenchen geboren, zaehlt in akademischen Kreisen zu den aeußerst umstrittenen Vertretern seiner Zunft... d(ein) Versuch, Kunstgeschichte gegenwarts- und anwendungsnah zu vermitteln sowie kuenstlerisch-praktische Aspekte einzubeziehen, was dem gängigen Wissenschaftsbetrieb schon damat widersprach.*" [Fritz Burger, born a good one hundred years ago on September 10th, 1877 in Munich, is counted in academic circles as an apparently controversial advocate of his group ... his attempt, to impart contemporary thought into art history and to connect it to artistic practice, certainly went the against scholarly establishment.]

²² Quoted in Hauck, 66. The full quote by Wölfflin from the letter regarding Burger's appointment: "Ich habe bisher die Ansicht vertreten, daß Herr Dr. F. Burger ... in methodischer Hinsicht so viel zu wünschen übrig lasse, daß seine Befürderung zum außerordentlichen Professor nicht leicht zu motiveieren sei. Er ist fleißig, fon großen unternehmungsgeist, weit ausgreifend und ernstlich bemüht, neue Gesichtspunkte für die Kunstgeschichte fruchtbar so machen. Diesen vorzügen steht aber ein fühlbarer mangel an wissenschaftlicher disziplin gegenüber..." [Up until now I have been an advocate of the opinion that Dr. Burger..in his methodological respects, leaves too much to be desired, that his advancement to be an exception professor would not be easy to bring about. He is hardworking, of a great enterprising spirit, reaches out broadly (into the discipline) and is honestly moved to make new points of view useful to art history. But these advantages are weighed against a palpable lack in scholarly discipline...]

²³ In this discussion, I have chosen to translate Wissenschaftlich as "scholarly," "systematically rigorous" or I have simply leave it un-translated. To translate Wissenschaft as Science and Wissenschaftlich as Sceintific casts art historians who use the term as positivists or empiricists, we might infer that they believe in a simple relationship between the natural sciences and the discussion of aesthetics or history; that the methods of science could be applied to art. This is almost never the case, Wissenschaft within the humanities has the connotation of "systematic, scholarly rigor" that can be intensive to the discipline rather than originating in what we would think of as "scientific."

academicians of previous generations. Burger saw his methodology in relation to existing methods, breaking from an expected definition of the *wissenschaftlich* and deriving its legitimacy from a philosophical grounding as much as from its novel turns of thought. Naturally, the depth of literature on this subject is so wide-ranging within the German literature as to render a comprehensive but brief synopsis impossible. To this end, I conclude this work with a discussion of some of the literature that informed the writings of the aestheticians, philosophers and art historians Burger found most useful or contentious in his own era. These extend from foundational idealist thought in the work of Hegel and Kant to the late 19th century writings of Konrad Fiedler and Friedrich Nietzsche.

Chapter One: Burger's Publications and Methodology, 1912–1916

The purpose of studying the art of the past cannot be to adopt past ideals and artistic perspectives. We would only acquire new biases instead of being done with the old ones.²⁴

In this chapter, three of Burger's most successfully received and widely-read works are considered: the *Die Schack Galerie*, *Cézanne und Hodler* and *Einführung in die moderne Kunst* (fig.1.0, 1.1, 1.2). These three books contain Burger's developing method of historical analysis, formal treatment of painting and general philosophical approach. Thematic treatment of Burger's theories of artistic *Erkenntnis*, the *Farbenproblem* and contemporary history follow a consideration of the content and general tack of Burger's written output. Finally, I address the question of German nationalism and art as it relates to Burger's support of both Hodler and the Expressionist artists, his use of Nietzsche's writings and his own writing's own appeal to anti-French sentiment during the war.

Burger began his academic training as a student of architecture at the Technical University of Munich [*München Technische Hochschule*] and undertook practical training as an architect studying drafting and model building (fig. 1.3). In 1898 he changed his course of studies to pursue art history under Henry Thode (1857–1920) at the University of Heidelberg.²⁵ As was typical for students of art history, Burger traveled to

²⁴ Burger, *Die Schack Galerie*, (Munich: Delphin, 1912), 137. "Es kann nicht der Zweck eines Studiums der Kunst der Vergangenheit sein, ihre Ideale und ihre künstlerischen Anschauung uns zu eigen zu machen, um nach ihnen die Gegenwart zu beurteilen. Wir würden nur neue Vorurteile erwerben statt die alten abzulegen."

²⁵ See "Henry Thode (1857-1920)" in Betthausen, ed., 413-15. Even briefly reviewing the life and work of Henry Thode it is apparent that Burger may have gleaned some of his later leanings; Thode was known for

Paris and Italy during his studies, interested primarily in studying monuments of Renaissance art and architecture.²⁶ In his first publication, however, he addressed a more contemporary and local subject. In *Thoughts on the Art of Darmstadt* [*Gedanken über die Darmstädter Kunst*] (1901) he produced an early interpretation of architectural innovation in the city of Darmstadt and the development of *Jugendstil*. Considering that the art colony held its first major exhibition in the same year, Burger's text provides primary scholarly treatment.²⁷ Burger finished his dissertation in 1904. Entitled, *History of Florentine Monuments from Ancient Times until Michelangelo*, [*Florentischen Grabmals von den ältesten Zeiten bis Michelangelo*], this dissertation work was a formal-analytical history of these monuments brought together with an historiographical review of known sources against the cultural background of the period.²⁸ Burger completed his post-doctoral teaching accreditation [*Habilitation*] at the University of Munich in 1906.²⁹ His third published manuscript was entitled *Vitruvius and the Renaissance* [*Vitruv und die Renaissance*] and in addition to his monograph on Francesco Laurana [*Francesco Laurana, Eine Studie zur italienischen Quattrocentoskulptur*] (1907) and Palladio, *The*

his flamboyant lecturing style and narrative writing style and, moreover, for his stance against Burckhardt's analysis of the Renaissance as a period of "emancipation" from Medieval values marked the emergence of the individual. This opinion seems to be echoed in Burger's own estimation for the Medieval period and (as seen in the *Schack Galerie* guide) his opinions regarding Renaissance humanism.

²⁶ Kraubig, 1.

²⁷ Burger, *Dedanken über die Darmstädter Kunst* (Leipzig: Seeman, 1901). The Darmstadt art colony was an art group and settlement founded just before 1900. Peter Behrens Joseph Maria Olbrich were both involved in founding the colony which officially continued until 1914.

²⁸ See Betthausen ed., 45. "Seine Dissertation ging in das umfangliche Buch, Geschichte des Florentiner Grabmals von den ältesten Zeiten bis Michelangelo ein, das formanalytische Stilgeschichte und Quellenauswertung unter Einbeziehung des soziokulturellen Hintergrunds miteinander verband."

²⁹ This work was published as an article the year it was finished: Burger, "Vitruv und die Renaissance," *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft* XXXII, (1909), 199-218.

Villas of Palladio (1909), Burger seems to have been embarking on an art historical career focusing on Renaissance architecture.

In tandem with the content of his teaching seminars, Burger's interests after 1909 turned increasingly from Italian art and architecture towards French and German art of the 19th century and 20th century. From 1906 until the outbreak of World War I, Burger was employed as a lecturer and adjunct professor [*Privatdozent*] at the University of Munich and from 1911 until mid-1914 also taught at the Munich Academy of Visual Arts [*Münchner Akademie der Bildenden Künste*].³⁰ As is discussed in the third chapter of this thesis, Burger offered courses discussing new movements in French and German painting as they were appearing in Paris, Berlin and Munich. It was also during this time that Burger began to correspond and visit with Kandinsky. Burger's participation in the contemporary art scene in Munich became not only a vital part of his teachings but greatly influenced his later academic output as he questioned his discipline's ability to confront the artistic output of its own era. As methodological contributions, Burger's *The Shack Gallery Guide*, *Cézanne und Hodler* and *Einführung in die Moderne Kunst* are representative of his work during this period. The first two texts were both written and published during Burger's time in Munich while the *Einführung* was published as a posthumous work.

³⁰ Kraubig, 1.

The Shack Galerie Guide

Burger's *Die Schack Galerie München* (1912) is a written walking tour of the Munich museum containing the collection of Count Friedrich von Schack (1815–1894).^{31,32} Focusing largely on then-contemporary German art, Schack's collection was comprised of works by Arnold Böcklin, Moritz von Schwind, Franz von Lenbach, Anselm Feuerbach and various other German history and landscape painters of the 19th century as well as a number of copies of Florentine Renaissance works. In 1907 the Schack collection was entrusted to the Bavarian state collection [*Bayerische Staatsarchiv*] and in 1910 moved into a space in the same building as the Prussian Embassy in Munich, a building faced with a bare, Ionic portico designed from sketches by Adolf von Hildebrand.³³

Burger was commissioned to write the Schack gallery guide in celebration of the reopening of the gallery and had a specific pedagogical directive. First, the guide was meant to educate the art museum-going public on this period in German art and, at least for Burger, to give them a philosophical entrée to art appreciation.³⁴ Second, it was

³¹ A Prussian official, failed poet and art collector, Schack began his collection in 1857 and bequeathed it to the German Kaiser Wilhelm II. After his death it became part of the state collection, although without permanent installation. To this day, the collection remains unchanged and is considered particularly representative of German art in the period. "Sammlung und Geschichte" Schackgalerie München website: <http://www.pinakothek.de/schack-galerie/sammlung.php>, accessed March 3, 2009.

³² Burger, *Die Schack Galerie*, (Munich: Delfin Verlag, 1912), 16. Burger writes of Schack: "Schack hat als Dichter sein Ziel nicht erreicht; er hat darunter schwer gelitten und sich bitter über die Teilnahmslosigkeit des deutschen Publikums seinen Werken gegenüber beklagt." [As a poet, Schack did not reach his goals; he suffered from the lack of interest from the public and their non-participation.]

³³ Hauck, 122.

³⁴ Burger, *Die Schack Galerie*, 5: "Der Führer will das gebildete Publikum, den Kunst-studierenden und den jngen Künstler in die künstlerischen Probleme der Bildwerke der Schackgalerie einführen und im Zusammenhang damit auch mit den Zeiten und Persönlichkeiten vertraut machen, in deren Wesen die

developed with the intention of supplementing art history classes at the University of Munich where, from 1907 on, Burger had given guided walks through the gallery as part of a seminar course.³⁵ Due to its considerable success as a publication, the guide was reprinted multiple times, reappearing in 1916 with the new title, “*Die deutschen Meister in der Schackgalerie München von Genelli bis Böcklin*” and with a laudatory forward to the recently deceased author.³⁶

Burger's text is a practical application of his theories of seeing and of historical interpretation created, not unlike his *Einführung*, for the average citizen. It is an art historical narrative meant for public consumption. The guide is unusual in that it contains not only descriptions of the works and a general outline of stylistic “development” (Burger does not use this term) but also fundamental statements regarding the function and viewing of art that relate more to Burger's theories of interpretation than to historical or stylistic elucidation of the specific works presented. At times the theoretical overlay of Burger's reading of the works seems at odds with what must have been the necessity of outlining the general historical characteristics of the collection. The final section of the guide is devoted exclusively to the discussion of the *Farbenprobleme*, a theory he would elaborate on the next year in the book, *Cézanne und Hodler*. As far as the historical

Kunstwerke wurzeln. Es ist ebenso vermieden worden, eine populäre Einführung zu schreiben, als in wissenschaftliche Detailbetrachtungen zu sehr einzugehen. Der Leser soll vor allem die Schackgalerie in ihrem künstlerischen Bestande kennen lernen, aber auch die Gelegenheit benützen, um das Auge durch Sehen und Vergleichen zu üben...” [This guide wants to familiarize educated public, those who study art as well as young artists with the artistic problems of art works in the Schack gallery in connection to the personalities and periods in which they are rooted. Writing a “popular” guide was avoided, as was writing a scholarly guide too full of detailed considerations. Above all the reader shall become familiar with the content of the holdings but also use this opportunity to train the eye through viewing and comparison.]

³⁵ See Chapter 2 of this text for Burger's courses during this period.

³⁶ See Burger, *Die deutschen Meister in der schackgalerie von Genelli bis Böcklin* (Munich: Delphin Verlag, 1916).

narrative is concerned, Burger attempts to interpret formal characteristics of works by individual artists reading back into them the concurrent shifts in world-view [*Weltanschauung*].

Beginning with the early 19th century work of Bonaventura Genelli, Burger anchors his analysis of the neo-classical works of the gallery in the thought of the Enlightenment, a period that marked a major shift away from the Renaissance and late Baroque. As Burger describes it, the Renaissance mind viewed mankind as the most “absolute creation,” in which both spiritual and sensual beauty were revealed.³⁷ But as part of a shift, “out of the sensual orgy of the Renaissance ... the ponderous and straight-laced austerity of Classicism emerged.”³⁸ Burger writes that in the art of the Enlightenment and its neo-classical expression the “godly in mankind” was no longer embodied in the human figure’s physical appearance, but in the pure reasoning capacity of the mind, its ability to survey and explain the world. In the Enlightenment, Burger writes, “human reason alone is considered the dominating force (and) of the same rank as visual art, poetry and philosophy.”³⁹ For Burger, this conception established modern philosophy but also developed a treatment of art more concerned with its ability to communicate ethical judgments than with the characteristics inherent to and apparent in art itself. “(They) brought into being an art having nothing to do with the sensual but

³⁷ Burger, *Schack Galerie*, 19: “Im 19. Jahrhundert vollzieht sich der grosse Kampf einer neuen Zeit mit der Weltanschauung der Renaissance. Die Kunst ist das anschauliche Manifest dieses Kampfes. Der Mensch war fuer die Renaissance das vollkommenste Geschöpf, in dem sich geistige und sinnliche Schönheit zugleich offenbart.”

³⁸ Ibid., 20: “auf den Sinnestaumel des Rokoko folgt der gravitatische sittenstrenge Ernst ... des Klassizismus.”

³⁹ Hauck, 130: “Der menschliche Verstand allein wird als die alles beherrschende macht betrachtet und an die Rangstelle der bildenden kunst treten Dichtkunst und Philosophie.”

rather with exclusively extra-artistic ideals;” thus thinkers and teachers rather than artists moved toward the vanguard of cultural life.⁴⁰

For Burger, Neoclassicism’s reliance upon an idealized vision of the past left its aestheticians able to enjoy only works of art whose essential content was illustrative of ethical ideas. This is, for Burger, in contrast to other eras in which art could be described as the visual embodiment of artistic *Erkenntnis*, and not as a discursive ethical illustration. As will be discussed, for Burger it was the free expression of the artist’s cognition, his impression of the world as translated into visual form, that made possible the unity [*Einheit*] or wholeness [*Ganzheit*] of great art. Thus the extra-aesthetic *content*, art’s “illustrative” use, made for a general deterioration in quality apparent in its lack of coherent, formal unity:

Sensual form dissipates into (individual) elements of perception (Wahrnehmung), the image deteriorates in space and body, and all that is physical deteriorates in its color and contour. Previously, a work’s sensual and spatial aspects, its borders between colors and the colors themselves, were all brought to an ordered unity. Now all these elements appear to exist for themselves and are seen for themselves.⁴¹

Burger’s analysis is that the formal dislocation of individual elements of the painting—color, line, space—result from art’s use as a vehicle for communication of extra-aesthetic thought. Thus the didactic use of art, as it originated in the general philosophical outlook of the period, resulted in the divorce of content from the creative form-making of the artist and can be “read” by Burger in its form.

⁴⁰ Ibid., “Die sittlichen Ideale stellte allerdings die Philosophie auf und die Kunst hatte somit nicht sinnliche sondern lediglich ausserkuenstlerische Ideale zur vierwirklichen.”

⁴¹ Burger, *Die Schack Galerie*, 21. “die sinnliche Gestaltung löst sich von selbst in die Elemente der Wahrnehmung auf, das Bild zerfaellt in Raum und Körper und alles Körperliche in Farbe und Kultur. War frueher Körper und Raum, Farbgrænze und Farbe eine farbig geordnete Einheit, so erscheint nun jedes fuer sich bestehend und fuer sich gesehen.”

In their consonance of terminology between what Burger identifies as Neoclassicism's lack of unity [*Einheit*]*—between colors, borders between colors, and individual contours—compares to the corresponding formal pairs of “Einheit” and “Vielheit” as described by Wölfflin in his 1915 publication, *Kunstgeschichtliche Grundbegriffe*. Where Burger contrasts the relative multiplicity of Neoclassicism with the unity of artistic expression found in the Romantic period, Wölfflin contrasts the general pictorial composition of the fifteenth with that of the sixteenth century:*

And the same difference prevails between a pictorial composition of the 15th and 16th centuries. In the first, the dispersed, in the second, the unified; In the first the poverty of the isolated follow by the inextricableness of all-too-much, in the second the structured whole, where every part is graspable, speaks for itself, and yet is immediately recognized for its relationship to the whole, as a member of the total form.⁴²

Both Burger and Wölfflin maintain that a picture, well-seen, can have the quality of being a disparate composition of parts or an immediately recognized whole. Wölfflin's analysis, at times, rests upon the depiction of minor elements within the motif as they create an overall impression of form; ears, hands, figures and drapery are all listed as the individual elements that are at once distinguishable and viewed as part of the work's *Einheit*.⁴³ Burger's treatment does not focus as explicitly on individual motif-related

⁴² Heinrich Wölfflin, *Kunstgeschichtliche Grundbegriffe* (Munich: Bruckman AG, 1917): 157, "Und derselbe Unterschied waltet zwischen einer Bildkomposition des 15. und des 16. Jahrhunderts. Dort das Zerstreute, hier das Zusammengefaßte: dort bald die Armut des Vereinzelten, bald die Unentwirrbarkeit des Allzuvielen, hier ein gegliedertes Ganzes, wo jeder Teil für sich spricht und faßbar ist und doch sofort in seinem Zusammenhang mit dem Ganzen, als Glied einer Gesamtform sich zu erkennen gibt."

⁴³ Ibid., 169: "Unterstützt von Mitteln der Lichtführung, läßt er einen mächtigen Strom von hoch oben her schräg durch das Bild gehen. Bei dem weißen Leintuch, das vom Querbalken herkommt, setzt es ein, der Körper Christi liegt in derselben Bahn und die Bewegung mündet in der Bucht der vielen Gestalten, die sich drängen, den Herabgleitenden zu empfangen ... Der Barock rechnet grundsätzlich nicht mehr mit einer Vielheit selbständiger Teile, die harmonisch zusammengreifen, sondern mit einer absoluten Einheit, in der der einzelne Teil sein Sonderrecht verloren hat." [He makes a mighty stream, reinforced by devices of lighting, pass slanting through the picture top. It sets in with the white cloth falling from the transverse beam; the body of Christ lies in the same course, and the movement pours into the bay of many figures

elements but upon the formal structure of the work as defined by line, contour and color. Wölfflin, of course, goes on to add four more formal pairs to his vocabulary while for Burger, *Einheit* remains the central formal characteristic of great works of art, while multiplicity remains the inferior trait. The consonance of vocabulary and the use of these pairings as a basis for characterizing the output of an art historical period aligns these concepts in both historians' work. Absent from both Wölfflin and Burger's treatments are consistent references to stylistic development, biography, patronage or artistic schools. Wölfflin's discursive treatment is more restrictive in *Kunstgeschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, whereas Burger's description of the works with regard to their choice of color, the effect of space in the image, interprets the formal syndrome as symptomatic of fundamental philosophical shifts in the period.⁴⁴

The Romantic era, the period to which the majority of the Schack Gallery's works belong, is described as the counter-movement to the Enlightenment, although to Burger this is more strongly felt in its general temperament [*Stimmung*] than in its artistic realizations. Burger very quickly and broadly characterizes the period according to its new emphasis on the individual personality, a rejection of universally applicable ethical ideals and a re-conception of man's relationship to nature.⁴⁵ In contrast to Neoclassicism,

wich crown round to receive the falling body ... in principal, the baroque no longer reckons with a multiplicity of co-ordinate units, harmoniously independent, but with an absolute unity in which the individual part has lost its rights.]

⁴⁴ Burger later comments quite directly on Wölfflin's "pairs" for formal analysis in *Cézanne und Hodler*. As he does not believe they are generated from the artist's point of view, but merely from the art historian's, he writes: "Man darf aber nicht glauben, daß das, was Hodler will, etwa ähnlich auch bei Meistern zu finden sei, die wie von der "linie" aus gehen, ein gutes Beispiel dafür sei, daß mit den üblichen Schlagworten "linear" oder "zeichnerisch" und "malerisch" gar nichts gesagt ist. " See the next section on *Cézanne und Hodler* for more direct use of this quotation.

⁴⁵ Burger, *Die Schack Galerie*, 33: "Man pochte auf das Recht der Persönlichkeit in ihrem Fühlen und Denken gegenüber den starren gesetzen klassizistischer Regeln. Das war der revolutionäre Zug der

“the sensual, sensible elements of art ceased to be the bearers of ideas originating in non-artistic thought (in human reason or morality) but became instead symbols of the personal expression and mood of the artist.”⁴⁶ According to Burger, the imaginative capacity of the Romantic artist was the result of his struggle for an understanding of himself as an element of nature within an as yet unfathomable universe, one that could be explained neither through religion nor science.⁴⁷ “The Romantics” he writes “sought the mysteriousness of life and saw, everywhere, God himself manifested in nature; thus artistic creation does not occur as the ordered fulfillment of prescriptive law, but in an emotive, devout, and dream-like state.”⁴⁸

Focusing the majority of the text on the gallery's holdings of paintings by Böcklin, Burger discusses the symbolist painter at length, but does not treat his work as typical of a “romantic” painter and provides no general stylistic definition for his work (fig. 1.4). Rather, his treatment of Böcklin's paintings, namely “Villa am Meer,” “Panischer Schrecken” and “Nymphe im Wald” move from this general description of philosophical paradigms concerning man's relationship to nature, to an almost impressionistic rendering of the effect of these works, their emotive expression as effected by their formal treatment of color, shadow and form (Fig's 6, 7).⁴⁹ Responsive to

Romantik. Mit dieser Betonung des individuellen hing, zumal bei dem erwachenden Nationalstolz in Deutschland...”

⁴⁶ Ibid., 32. “...die sinnlichen Elemente der Kunstwerke wurden nun statt Trägern von Weltideen zu Symbolen der persönlichen Stimmungen.”

⁴⁷ Ibid., 39.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 32. “Man suchte das Geheimnisvolle und sah überall in der “Natur” das Göttliche selbst verwirklicht ... Das Schaffen des Künstlers würde somit nicht in abwägender Erfüllung der Regeln bestehen, sondern in einem gefühlvollen, gläubigen Träumen.”

⁴⁹ Burger, *Die Schack Galerie*, 105: “Schlösser, von Stürmen utmost, wie zerklüftete Felsen in das bleiche Mondlicht ragend, einsame Gestade mit zerfallendem Werk von Menschenhand, der Tod als schwarzer Reiter durch die Dämmerung des gewitterigen Herbstags reitend, die Pest, der Mord, schaurig schöne

the mood of the work itself, Burger seeks to clarify, in lyrical and somewhat affected, expressive language, this confirmation of the Romantic perception of nature's power in the paintings themselves, the “deep, melancholically inscrutable *Weltwillen* in a menacing eternity confronting mankind.”⁵⁰

The *Farbenproblem* and Art History's Contemporaneity

The final pages of the guide contain the theoretical tenets that Burger further develops in *Cézanne und Hodler* and that break from the philosophical-historical narrative in the first portion of the text. First, Burger offers a negative appraisal of Schack gallery's artists—namely, Lenbach and Böcklin—rather than providing the general and affirmative praise that might be expected in a gallery guide. For Burger, the essential failure of the German Symbolists was their inability to produce a truly modern art due to their chronic return to classical motif and historical themes:

Especially these “greats” in the Schack gallery who present themselves to us in their tragic artistic lives, speak forcefully. This historical period glanced backwards, and thus they became backwards prophets ... people believed in a “Renaissance” of modern art that could only be brought to fruition with the help of the dead ... (but) the present will only creep out of the past when it is too weak to stand on its own legs.⁵¹

Opferhandlungen.... Gebirge mit Abgründ, tief wie der Höllenschlund..." "Castles, tossed by storms, like ragged rocks looming in the moonlight, lonely shores with the moldering achievements of mankind, Death as the dark rider galloping through the twilight of a storming fall day, plague, murder, eerily beautiful sacrifice ... Mountains with chasms, deep as the abyss of hell..."

⁵⁰ Ibid.: "Eine tiefe, melancholisch-depressive Symbolik spricht deshalb oft aus seinem Bildern..." "Natura Naturans," als gestaltende Natur und unerforschlicher Weltenwille in bedrohlicher Unendlichkeit, die dem Menschenwillen gegenübertritt." [Thus a deep, depressive and melancholy symbolism speaks through their pictures.... "Natura Naturans" as a forming Nature, an inscrutable]

⁵¹ Ibid., 136: "Gerade die Großen, die in der Schackgalerie in ihrem tragischen künstlerischen Lebensgang uns vor Augen treten, reden da eine eindringliche Sprache. Der Blick des Zeitalters war zu sehr nach rückwärts gerichtet, und so sind sie alle rückwärts Propheten geworden. Das Dogma eines historisch orientierten Zeitalters lastet schwer auf ihren freiheitsdurstigen Seelen. Man glaubte an eine „Renaissance“"

Second, Burger's criticism of these artists' inability to create art by attempting to revive the spirit of past eras extends to his criticism of art historiography. For Burger, historians must reconcile their own contemporaneity methodologically rather than attempt to grasp the *Geist* of a past age as an interpretive prosthetic.⁵² Likewise, it is here that Burger first voices the justification for his own methodology's exclusion of standard cultural-historical content:

History has taught us that the past can never communicate its fundamental character [*Geist*] to us, rather it will always reflect our own fundamental character [*Geist*], "What you take as the mind of an age, is fundamental your own"... We will be able to understand the past only as far as we acquire a self-procured cognition [*Erkenntnis*] ... the ability to understand what art is does not necessarily result from studying the artistic life of a period...⁵³

As stated earlier in the guide, Burger hinges the revolutionary character of the Romantic Movement on its emphasis upon the individual. Within the *Schackgalerie* collection, Burger finds this emphasis manifested in a preference for the representation of local landscapes and is concurrent with the awakening of national sentiment in Germany.⁵⁴ National character, as another facet of a cultural-historical approach, does not make its appearance in Burger's methodology as an explanation for the appearance of Böcklin's works. Although the *Schack Galerie* could have been promoted for its

der modernen Kunst, die sich nur mit Hilfe der Toten vollziehen könne... An der Vergangenheit wird sich die Gegenwart nur dann emporranken, wenn sie zu schwach ist, um auf eigenen Füßen zu stehen."

⁵² Note on translation: *Geist* is translated here as "fundamental character" or "mind" as seems fit, not as spirit. Considering words like Geisteswissenschaft, "mind" seems the more appropriate translation at time as Geisteswissenschaft (Wissenschaft to be translated at Scholarship) would be the "scholarship of the mind," that is, the Humanities, instead of "science of spirit."

⁵³ Burger, *Die Schack Galerie*, 137: "Wir haben aus der Geschichte gelernt, dass uns die Vergangenheit nie ihren Geist übermitteln kann sondern stets unser eigenes Wesen zurückstrahlt. „Was ihr den Geist der Zeiten nennt das ist im Grunde Euer Geist.“... Wir vermögen die Vergangenheit nur so weit zu verstehen, als unsere selbsterworbenen Erkenntnisse reichen... Aus der Beschäftigung mit einer Epoche künstlerischen Lebens erwächst nicht die Fähigkeit der Erkenntnis alles dessen, was Kunst heißt."

⁵⁴ Ibid., 41: "Mit dieser Betonung des Individuellen hing, zumal bei dem erwachenden Nationalstolz in Deutschland, auch die Vorliebe für die Darstellung."

reflection of 19th-century “Germanness” Burger rejects such an analysis for two reasons. First, as it would make a monolith of “the German” and, second, as it would prime the public for a rejection of modern art:

One must make sure not to make the question of Böcklin one of nationality. What we conceive of as “German” cannot be grasped as a stable concept but rather we must search through its own riches to understand its mutability [*Veränderlichkeit*]. The present provides the German with a different face. We should not lament when it appears different than we had expected.⁵⁵

With some foresight, Burger seems to recognize that if late 19th-century Symbolist landscapes became the shibboleth of modern German aesthetics for the art-going public, they might be far less inclined to recognize contemporary German abstraction as their own. This comment, however, is not an outright rejection of national origin as an organizing category for interpretation, only that as such, it could not be considered a stable concept. As will be addressed in the consideration of Burger's next two books, the evolution of “national spirit” became of overwhelming importance to his interpretation of modern art.

The last section of the *Schack Galerie* guide contains Burger's explanation of the *Farbenproblem* [color problem]. Burger's theory of color and perception is based on the thesis that what we understand to be spatial [*räumlich*] or physical [*körperlich*] aspects of a painting are, in fact, our perception of bounded patches of color. These color patches create our impression of form and line (and thus motif) in the picture through the relationships of color borders, the space between patches and the balance of opposites

⁵⁵ Ibid., 132: "Aber man sollte sich hüten, aus der Frage Böcklin eine nationale Frage zu machen. Man fasse das, was man „deutsch“ nennt, nicht zu einem stabilen Begriff zusammen, sondern suche den Reichtum desselben auch in seiner Veränderlichkeit zu begreifen. – Die Gegenwart gibt auch dem Deutschen ein anderes Gesicht. Man soll aber nicht klagen, wenn es anders aussieht, als man erwartet hat."

and equilibriums of color.⁵⁶ In reply to his friend Adolf Hildebrand's *Das Problem der Form in der bildenen Kunst* (1893), Burger writes that, "Like visual art in general, painting is fundamentally concerned with color as a structuring element, thus the so-called "problem of form" is really a problem of color."⁵⁷

Burger's postulation of the *Farbenproblem* is key to understanding his methodological tact as it ties together his rejection of cultural-historical discourse and stylistic narrative, his individual treatment of artists, his reflection upon artistic technique and his valuation of *Einheit* as a desired quality in art. As the fundamental unit of the image, the color patch [*Farbenfleck*] would be most closely connected to the individual line or brushstroke of the artist. The brushstroke, the creation of the color patch, is also unique to each artist and at this level, what Burger elsewhere refers to as the "monad" of painting, and thus precedes any questions of style.⁵⁸ Instead of comparing the overall treatment of a motif to find style, art historical analysis must remain closely tied to artistic technique, the laying on of color, because at this level we find the unique form-making decisions made by the artist. The painting, as it is raised from the color-splotch monad to the unique *Einheit* of the *Bild*, is done so through the expression of the artist's

⁵⁶ Burger, *Die Schack Galerie*, 139: "Das, was wir von unserer Umgebung zunächst wahrnehmen, sind umgrenzte Farbflecken. Die Helligkeitsunterschiede diese umgrenzten Farbflecke deuten wir räumlich und körperlich. Wir unterscheiden damit einzelnes in unserer Umgebung. Durch die Beziehung der Grenzen dieser Farbflecken und den allmählichen Ausgleich der Farbgegensätze (Lichtunterschiede) stellen wir eine Verbindung dieser Einzelheiten dar. Dies Trennen und Verbinden der farbigen Einzelheiten begreift man unter der Bezeichnung Farbenprobleme." [That which we perceive in our environment is (made of) discreet splotches of color. We construe differences in the colors' level of intensity as having a spatial and physical dimension. Thus we delineate between individual things in our environment. Through the relationships of the limits (boundaries – confines) of these color splotches and the gradual balance of color opposites (differences in colors) we present (darstellen) the connection between these particulars.]

⁵⁷ Ibid., "Die Malerei, wie überhaupt die bildende Kunst, kennt als das Wesentliche ihres Gestaltungsgebietes nur Farbenprobleme, denn das sog. "Formproblem" ist eben ein Farbenproblem."

⁵⁸ For Burger's reference to the color patch as the Monad (in Spinoza's sense) of painting see Burger, *Cézanne und Hodler*, 44.

Erkenntnis, a unique knowledge formed visually rather than linguistically. Burger insisted that art history students should study the artistic technique in order gain a fluency in the language of art, one that requires the investigation of the brushstrokes, color patches and the drawn line as the primary element of artistic creation.⁵⁹

As variation in color patches emerges from technique and is removed from later considerations of motif or style, Burger's *Farbenproblem* comes very close to John Ruskin's own description of the fundamental treatment of color on a canvas described in his *Elements of Drawing* (1879). Ruskin's book was translated into German although here Burger's awareness and use of Ruskin's treatise is only speculative. However, Ruskin's comment that "...the whole of Painting consists merely in perceiving the shape and depth of these patches of color..." compels comparison to Burger's work.⁶⁰ While Ruskin's text is for the instruction of artists, Burger's art historical treatment shares this basic principle and contains a similar imperative for artistic creation. Specifically, that the task [*die Aufgabe*] of the artist is consistent across time and space in regard to bringing these disparate units of paint into an organized whole: "In this way the task of art is always the

⁵⁹ Matthias Müller-Lentrod, "Subjektivieren mit höchster Kraft," 68: "seine wichtigste und wirksamste kunstpädagogische Neuerung war das von ihm ins Leben gerufene "Kunstwissenschaftliche Praktikum." Mit diesem Praktikum, das sowohl für Kunstgeschichtsstudenten wie auch für Künstler als neue Ausbildungsform erprobt wurde, unternahm Burger den Versuch, künstlerisch-praktische Formen des Unterrichts mit erkenntni-theoretischen Fragen zu verbinden."

⁶⁰ See John Ruskin, *Elements of Drawing*, (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1876), 23f. "This, in your hand, which you know by experience and touch to be a book, is to your eye nothing but a patch of white, variously gradated and spotted; this other thing near you, which by experience you know to be a table, is to your eye only a patch of brown, variously darkened and veined; and so on: the whole of Painting consists merely in perceiving the shape and depth of these patches of color and putting patches of the same size, depth, and shape on the canvas." It would be helpful but was not possible at this time to get a copy of Ruskin's work as it was translated into German at the turn of the century; consonance in vocabulary could have warranted more conclusive comparison.

same, and in the fundamental immanent indissolubility of this task lays both the guarantee of its existence, the development of art and the originality of genius.”⁶¹

Returning to the question of what is appropriate to art itself, Burger poses the *Farbenprobleme* as the foundation for a method grounded in what he believes to be art's intensive qualities. Applying his theory to the works of the *Schack Galerie*, works by Böcklin and Lenbach are revisited in this final chapter, this time entirely without recourse to historical background; each artist is described in terms of their specific deployment of color.⁶² To Burger, a developmental narrative of style that neglects the method of an individual artist should be replaced by an approach that takes each work of art as the presentation of an artist's unique ability to bring these color patches into *Einheit*. The creation [*Herstellung*] of unity [*Einheit*] from these disparate parts is both the task of the artist and the aperture through which art history might grasp the meaning of the work. For Burger, the term “style” is also jettisoned for descriptions of the process of creating a unity in the work; Burger refers to the finished unity as the “*Vorstellungskomplex*” literally, the “presentation complex” and the appearance of this unity to the viewer as the *Gesichtsvorstellung*, a term borrowed from Hildebrand's work to describe the appearance of wholeness in a work of art from a distance.⁶³⁶⁴

⁶¹ Burger, *Fragmentarische Notizen zur Systematik für Kunstwissenschaft* (Estate of Fritz Burger, Heidelberg), 33: “Die Aufgabe der Kunst ist seiner Ansicht nach immer dieselbe, in der grundsätzlich immanenten Unlösbarkeit dieser Aufgabe liege zugleich die Gewähr den fortdauernden Bestand und die Entwicklung der Kunst, wie auch für die Originalität des Genies.” Quoted in Hauck, 82.

⁶² See Burger, *Die Schack Galerie*, 143-158. To contrast Hans von Marées and Böcklin he writes: “Sucht Hans von Marées die Farbe zu Licht machen, so geht Böcklin darauf aus, Licht zu Farbe zu machen, deshalb endigt Hans von Marées beim “licht,” Böcklin beim “Lokalfarbe.” [Marées attempt to make the color into light and Böcklin begins by making light into color, therefore concludes with “light” and Böcklin with “local color.”], 150.

⁶³ See Burger, *Die Schack Galerie*, 142: “Versteht man unter “Farbenproblem” den Gestaltungsprozeß, so unter “Maltechnik” den Herstellungsprozeß des Gestaltungs - d.h. des sinnlichen Erkenntnisprozesses.” “By

Within the disruption [*Trennung*] or the union [*Verbindung*] of patches and borders of color, one finds the unique character of the artist's thought expressed in paint, thus through close observation the historian comes closest to artistic cognition, the *künstlerische Erkenntnis* of the artists themselves. Burger writes, "So far as one considers the material presented in its extra-artistic relationships, one is dealing with the problems of culture, in so far as one seeks the expression of *Erkenntnis*, one is dealing with art alone."⁶⁵

Cézanne und Hodler and Artistic Erkenntnis

Cézanne und Hodler was published by the Delphin Verlag in Munich in 1913 and was Burger's attempt to introduce a broad reading audience to his interpretation of a range of recent French and German art including Impressionism, Cubism and Expressionism.⁶⁶ Here Burger continues to develop his theory of the *Farbenprobleme* as a method to reveal the artist's *Erkenntnis* that is, the artist's unique insight and perception. The *Erkenntnis* is what the work of art can *show*. This method, according to Burger,

"Color problem" we understand it to be the process of creation, in this way "Painting technique," as the construction of the form, means the sensible process of *Erkenntnis*."

⁶⁴ See Adolf Hildebrand, *Das Problem der Form in der bildenen Kunst* (Strassburg: Heitz, 1908): 28-29.

⁶⁵ Burger, *Die Schack Galerie*, 144: "Sofern man den Stoff des Dargestellten in seinen außerkünstlerischen formalen Beziehungen betrachtet, hat man es mit Kulturproblemen zu tun, sofern man den Ausdruck der *Erkenntnis* sucht, allein mit dem Kunst."

⁶⁶ Burger, *Cézanne und Hodler*, I. Burger states explicitly in his forward to the book that art had undergone such a radical change in the last fifteen years as to produce exhibits which were both baffling and seemingly prosoposterous to the art-going public, the need for a pedagogical foundation for understanding the contemporary period. Moreover that this new and radical shift forced the contemporary period into a self-reflexive position: "Die Kunstaussstellungen bringen da und dort was Rätselhafteste und Absonderlichste vor das verwunderte Auge der Gegenwart, und die bange Frage nach dem Werte des Vergangenen, dem Willen der Gegenwart und dem Schicksal der Zukunft drängt sich auf aller Lippen. Das Buch hat es sich zur Aufgabe gemacht, auf diese Fragen, die die Zeit beschäftigen, einige Antworten zu geben."

would re-ground the art historian's work within the domain of art; by reading into technique, color and formal construction, the scholar might intuitively grasp the unique artistic and philosophical insight of the artist. To make general statements regarding Burger's text is difficult considering the extensive range of topics and artists he chooses to discuss.⁶⁷ However, this discussion centers largely on Burger's description of the book's method and considers its application to his chosen antipodes, the painters Paul Cézanne and Ferdinand Hodler.

Taking the "artistic problem" as a constant, Burger further develops an approach he had only sketched out in the *Schack Galerie* guide. Again, he argues that the color patch is the fundamental unit of the canvas, here supporting this thesis with various quotations from artist's regarding their technique.⁶⁸ Likewise, Burger maintains that the historian must approach interpretation through the presentation of color in the work of art to be "treated in discreet considerations ... (and) not interpreted with regard to so-called historical relationships."⁶⁹⁷⁰ Finally, he restates that art historians have no basis to claim

⁶⁷ In *Cézanne und Hodler*, a "new" topic is broached every few pages, the book includes discussion of no less than twenty-five artists and contains chapters on musical drama the poetry of George, as well as biographical information for Cézanne and extensive philosophical passages which, perhaps due to their sheer number, follow each other in quick succession.

⁶⁸ Burger, *Cézanne und Hodler*, 16. "Cézanne sagt: "Zeichnung und Farbe sind nicht deutlich bestimmbar, eins bedingt das andere, je feinder die Tonwerte sind, desto präziser wird die Zeichnung. Der Reichtung der Farbe bedingt die Vollkommenheit der Form. Die Kontraste und Bezeihungen der Töne zueinander, darin liegt das Geheimnis dr Modellierung."

⁶⁹ Burger, *Cézanne und Hodler*, 201. "der Kunstwerk [soll] als Einzelleistung betrachtet [sein] und erkannt werden soll, nicht mit Rücksicht auf seine außerkünstlichen, die sogenannten historischen Beziehung, [handelt]."

⁷⁰ Another discussion of the Farbenprobleme is present in *Cézanne und Hodler* and appears more or less synonymous with that present in the Schackgalerie guide, "Für die Darstellung ist eine Figur nur eine bestimmte Summe von Farbflecken mit bestimmt geregelten sinnlichen Beziehungen zum "Bilde." Durch diese Grenzrelationen der Farbflecke wird die Bildeinheit hergestellt, werden die Einzelheiten für das Auge eines Das Bild..." and quotes Cézanne as writing, "Der Reichtum der Farbe bedingt die Vollkommenheit der Form. Die Kontraste und Beziehungen der Töne zueinander, darin liegt das Geheimnis der Modellierung." [the figure is only the specific form of a sum of color-patches within the

an objective view of historical development, but must grasp the modern *Weltanschauung* guiding his own work through contact with contemporary art.⁷¹

In his forward to the book, Burger poses a direct challenge to contemporary methodology, addressing the risk one takes in writing about art according to other, intuitive criteria:

Some twenty-five years ago Heinrich Wölfflin wrote that, "the historian who has a style to judge possesses no faculties to characterize it, rather he is directed according to instinctive intuitions." If art history really desires to be this, to be what it should ... [art historians] must have no fear of erring [and] must have the courage to employ their work where there they do not have the many tools of historical research already at hand...⁷²

The criteria under which Burger discusses art in *Cézanne und Hodler* can be read as a ranging enargia upon, and application of, his theory of artistic *Erkenntnis*. Putting aside the standard methodological tools of stylistic analysis or biographical inquiry, Burger takes his theory of unique artistic perception a step further to argue that the visual manifestation of *Erkenntnis* in the work of art can be read by the art historian to specific ends. That is, to reveal the artist's unique conception of nature, one that is made manifest anew in the mysterious wholeness [*Ganzheit*] of each individual image or painting.⁷³ For

presentation (of the painting). Through the relationships of the borders of the color splotches the unity of the painting is constructed, the individual parts become, for the eyes, one thing ... the picture." And his quote from Cézanne, "The richness of color conditions the perfection of form. The contrast and relationships of tones to each other, therein lies the secret of modeling.]

⁷¹ Ibid.: "... wir Kunsthistoriker nicht immer bloß untersuchen sollen, wie die geschichtliche Erkenntnis für die der Gegenwart zu verwerten sei, sondern welche Erkenntnisse uns die Gegenwart für die Beurteilung der Vergangenheit vermittelt. Deshalb wird hier weniger von der Geschichte der Kunst, als von Kunst überhaupt die Rede sein." [...us art historians must not always plainly scrutinize how the historical Erkenntnis should be valued by the present, but rather which Erkenntnis is given to us by the contemporary period with which to judge the past. Therefore there will be less discussion here of the history of art as from art in general.]

⁷² Ibid., 7. "der Historiker, der einen Stil zu beurteilen hat, besitzt kein Organon zur charakteristik, sondering ist nur auf ein instinktives Ahnen angewiesen" schrieb Heinrich Wölfflin schon vor 25 Jahren. Wenn die Kunstwissenschaft wirklich das sein will, was sie sein soll, dann ... Sie muß den Mut haben, ihre Arbeit auch da einzusetzen, wo sie ohne das umfangreiche Werkzeug historischer forsunngen auf den Plan tritt, ohne Furcht vor der Gefahr zu irren."

⁷³ Müller-Lentrodt, 72.

Burger, it is not the ungraspable imagination of the artist, but the tangible, painterly techniques and choices used to complete the work of art that make this manifestation, the *Vorstellungskomplex*, possible, “where art becomes a means towards the goal of the perception of Nature”⁷⁴:

We will cease to want to see art through nature, far more we will make art the subject through which we learn to see nature. With this our perception (*Vorstellung*) is not something psychiatric, nor is it meant to be understood as what we generally call “imagination,” instead it is simply the sensible ordering of our consciousness.⁷⁵

The difficulty that appears evident in Burger's method is the apparent impossibility of translating this artistic thought from vision to language. If artists are, as Burger considers them, great philosophers from whom we might learn the shape of consciousness itself, how are we to read their thoughts *through* the image?⁷⁶ Liane Burckhardt's essay, “...bei alle Wissenschaftlichkeit lebendig...” proposes that for Burger, artistic work was nothing less than, “*Denken in Anschauung*,” that is, thinking in visual form, a concept drawn from Konrad Fiedler's writings⁷⁷ As such, *Denken in Anschauung* was of equal significance to *Denken in Begriffen*, thinking in concepts. The difference between these two forms of *Denken* was “only in the material nature of

⁷⁴See *Cézanne und Hodler*, 16: “die Einheit des Kunstwerkes kann mithin unter einem doppelten Gesichtspunkt betrachtet werden ... durch diese Grenzrelationen der Farbflecke wird die Bildeinheit hergestellt, werden die Einzelheiten für das Auge eines ... das Bild”

⁷⁵ Burger, *Cézanne und Hodler*, 200: “Wir werden aufhören, die Kunst durch die Natur sehen zu wollen, wir werden vielmehr die Kunst unterwerfen, damit sie uns die Natur sehen lerne. Unter Vorstellung ist hierbei weder etwas Psychisches, noch das zu verstehen, was wir gemeinhin Phantasie nennen, sondern einfach die sinnliche Ordnung unseres Bewußtseins.” By jettisoning Erkenntnis as neither “psychiatric” nor simply “imaginative,” Burger appears to be positioning himself against the psycho-physiological theories he would have been familiar with through Theodor Lipps or Wilhelm Wundt. As he discusses elsewhere in *Cézanne und Hodler*, these theories cannot grasp the “transcendental” nature of artistic thought. See “Reaktion gegen die Psychologie” in *Cézanne und Hodler*, 181-182.

⁷⁶ Burger comments at many points regarding the artist as a great philosopher and artistic thought as being inherently philosophical, see: *Ibid.*, 17-18: “Kunstwerke sind Theorien über das Weltendasein ... wenn alles menschliche Denken ein Urteil über die Natur ist, so ist auch die Kunst ein Urteil über die Natur...”

⁷⁷ Liane Burckhardt, “...bei alle Wissenschaftlichkeit lebendig,” 78.

thought.”⁷⁸ Burger draws this parallel, between language and art, in explicit terms when he writes, “in the way that thought is evolved in speaking, so sight evolves as sight with visual representation.”⁷⁹

The justification of his study of technique is thereby based upon its analogical relationship to the practice of writing or speaking: “painting technique plays the same fundamental role in artistic life as the techniques of writing and speaking do for writing and speaking ... but as with painting, all speaking and writing techniques are of no benefit if our capacity for thought is not developed.”⁸⁰ Thus only consideration of the work, *in sich*, could reveal the philosophical insight of the artist; the splotch of paint, the line of the pencil or the balance of color in a picture takes on an importance in Burger's work that does not have strictly formal, but rather epistemological and, finally, metaphysical significance.⁸¹

The application of Burger's theory of the *Farbenproblem* emerges in *Cézanne und Hodler* through his description of artists' formal deployment of color as a way in which to read back into the image a philosophical narrative of the artist's *Weltanschauung*. It can be said with little reservation that despite Burger's clamoring against theories of stylistic development he has not jettisoned a developmental history of art altogether. Instead,

⁷⁸ Ibid., 170. "Fritz Burger maß dem "Denken in Anschauungen" die gleiche Wertigkeit zu wie dem "Denken in Begriffen." Daher unterschieden sich Kunst und Wissenschaft für ihn "nur im Material des Denkens." In beiden "Materialformen" aber sollten die Studenten sich bewegen lernen." [Burger gauged "thought in visual form" as having the same significance as "thinking in concepts." In this way, art and science were only differentiated from each other in the "material of thought." Students should be moved to learn both "form materials.]"

⁷⁹ Burger, *Cézanne und Hodler*, 201: "Wie sich das Denken mit der Sprache entwickelt, so das Sehen als Sehen mit der bildlichen Darstellung."

⁸⁰ Ibid., 17: "Im Grunde spielt die Technik dieselbe Rolle im künstlerischen Leben wie die Schreib- und Sprechtechnik beim Schreiben und Sprechen."

⁸¹ For the sake of brevity, this discussion has been shortened considerably.

biographical and concrete historical connection are moved to the periphery and the observation of color tone, shadow, border and patches becomes the central interpretive tool for an analogous construction of inheritance and historical contribution based on his “philosophical” reading. And if Cézanne and Hodler are paired opposites, it is because Burger believes their use of color informs the *Farbenprobleme* of contemporary art in its *anschauliche Denken*.⁸² But in order to make the leap from the reading of color and technique in the work of art and back into the extra-personal [*überpersönlich*] thought of the artwork, Burger relies on a number of philosophical apparatuses.

Hegel and Fiedler

Art has nothing to do with forms that existed before and apart from this activity; the beginning and end of its activity lies in the creation of forms that come into being with it. Art creates no second world alongside another independent word; rather it creates a world made by and for artistic consciousness.⁸³

The writings of Konrad Fiedler and Georg Friedrich Hegel are the two most noteworthy methodological and theoretical references in *Cézanne und Hodler*. The influence of Hegel in Burger's work, hitherto unmentioned in his writing, is here quite apparent, particularly as art is here conceived as the externalization or visualization of *Erkenntnis*.⁸⁴ Hegel figures into Burger's own description of his method's formulation as

⁸² Cézanne's influence on the younger generation of German painters, namely Kirchner, in his section although he claims "it is only the formula, and not the Erkenntnis, the Geist, that is taken over from Cézanne." "Es ist zumeist nur die Formel, nicht die Erkenntnis, der Geist, den man übernommen (von Cézanne) hat." Ibid., 115-116.

⁸³ Konrad Fiedler quoted in Mallgrave and Ikonoumos, eds., *Empathy Form and Space*, 35.

⁸⁴ See Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Sämtliche Werke* (Stuttgart: 1927) vol. 12, 213: "Wie man oben von dem Äußern des menschlichen Körpers gesagt hat, daß an der Oberfläch der desselben, ... sich überall das

he freely quotes the philosopher at several points within the text—sometimes only as a casual mention that the previous idea was “Hegelian” [*Hegelsche*] in origin.⁸⁵ In *Cézanne und Hodler*, Hegel's writing is repeatedly put to work to support Burger's own specific methodological conclusions. In only one example, a quotation from Hegel, “the true freedom of the individual is its ability to go beyond [itself], the ultimate communion is the ultimate freedom,” is put to use by Burger to account for his belief in the artist's ability to create an extra-personal [*überpersönlich*] work of art, representing the mind of the age but divorced from biographical detail or personality.⁸⁷

Burger's use of Hegel is not particularly surprising for the period in which he was writing as for many if not all art historians of his generation and those preceding, Hegel was considered not only the “end” (or fulfillment) of Idealist aesthetics, but as the completion and epitome of its achievements.⁸⁸ And although the majority of Hegel's writings on aesthetics and the status of the art object were published posthumously (based on notes from his Berlin and Heidelberg lectures) he was nonetheless one of the primary

pulsierende Herz zeigt, in demselben Sinne kann von der Kunst behauptet werden, daß sie das Erscheinende an allen Punkten seiner Oberfläche zum Auge umzuwandeln habe, welche der Sitz der Seele ist, und den Geist zur Erscheinung bringt." Here, as quoted in Hauck, 89.

⁸⁵ For Burger's extended quotation of Hegel (although without attribution to specific text) See: Ibid., 11, 14, 15, 18, 19, 22, 34, 37, 61, 177, 182, 198. It should not be overlooked that Burger does appear to be working from Hegel as an original but from an apparent synopsis by Falkenheim entitled "Hegel" in a series edited by Aster entitled 'Große Denker,' vol 2.

⁸⁶ Restriction on the scope of this thesis alone made a full consideration of the influence of Hegel's work on Burger's methodology impractical. To consider Hegel's work's relationship to Burger would certainly require reading Hegel in the original language in order to glean the consonances of language and terminology between the two texts without the problems presented by his various translators. As future work on the methodologies of art historians are developed in my own work, I hope to be able to better understand art history's use of Hegel's thought in its interpretive approaches.

⁸⁷ Burger, *Cézanne und Hodler*, 11. "wer seine [der Kunstlers] Persönlichkeit erst suchen muß, der verliert sie. Denn der Wert alles persönlichkeit erst suchen muß, der verliert sie. Denn der Wert alles persönlichen Schaffens liegt im Grunde in dem überpersönlichen Arbeitsresultat. Deshalb sagt Hegel, daß "die wahre Freiheit des Individuums Erweiterung, die höchste Gemeinschaft die höchste Freiheit ist."

⁸⁸ For an English language discussion of Hegel's contribution to the philosophy of aesthetics, see Kai Hammerstein, *The German Aesthetic Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 87-108.

figures in the history of art history.⁸⁹ Naturally Hegel's conception of the journey of the *Geist*, in which the final stage of the *Geist* is the embodiment of the absolute spirit in art, religious revelation and philosophy, is germane to perhaps all art historical discussions of the period. Whereas Kant had argued for a disjuncture between cognitively understood truth and the aesthetic perception of works of art, interpretations of Hegel's aesthetic thought re-privileged the interpretation of artwork as a philosophical endeavor:

In its freedom beautiful art is only true art and serves its highest purpose only when it has situated itself in a common circle together with religion and philosophy and is only one way to bring to consciousness and to express the deepest interests of man, the most comprehensive truths of the spirit.⁹⁰

For Hegel art may be less important than, but is not opposed to, a *begrifflich* [conceptual] truth as produced by philosophy. As Burger attempts to interpret works of art for a content similar to philosophical understanding and fused to the visual appearance of the work, he certainly substantiates his method with Hegel's insistence that art contains objective truth, even if the project of its translation into language may be impossible or insufficient.⁹¹ Moreover, the ubiquitous abandonment of art historical interpretation based on the assumption of a mimetic relationship between work and world at the turn of the century also finds support in Hegel's aesthetic studies. For Hegel, the work of art is no shadow of reality, or worse, a shadow of a shadow, twice removed from a pure form. Rather, works of art were revelatory. Beautiful works of art allow a clearer perception of the true essence [*Wesen*] of all objects, beauty itself being defined as “the sensual appearance of the idea” [*das sinnliche Scheinen der Idee*]. “Far from being mere

⁸⁹ See Michael Podro, *The Critical Historians of Art* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), 17-27.

⁹⁰ Quoted in: Hammermeister, 94.

⁹¹ Ibid., 94-95.

deception,” wrote Hegel, “the appearances [*Erscheinungen*] of art must be considered the higher reality and the more truthful existence compared to ordinary reality.”⁹² Breaking with romantic aestheticians (the brothers Schlegel, Schelling), Hegel advances the argument that reflection on the work of art is, itself, a philosophical task. The philosophical truths contained in the artist's *Anschauliche Denken* as evidenced by the work of art were, for Burger, certainly on par with philosophical truth derived from any other variety of observation.⁹³ Thus his conception of an artistic *Erkenntnis* [cognition] that must be translated by the art historian through the work of art certainly squares with Hegel's own post-Romantic reevaluation of the cognitive faculty necessarily at work in the interpretation of the work of art.⁹⁴

Turning to more recent theoretical precedence, the work of Konrad Fiedler (1841–1895) is perhaps the most evident source for Burger's speculative, intuitive methodology as developed in *Cézanne und Hodler*.⁹⁵ Though infrequently discussed in the English language literature, Fiedler remained an influential figure to the art historians in Burger's generation and up until the twenties and thirties.⁹⁶ A theorist, critic and curator, Fiedler

⁹² Ibid., 94.

⁹³ Looking towards Burger's post-humously published *Einführung* and Burger's ever-more consuming interest in Nietzsche, his language as it concerns the philosophical content of art grows more urgent, that modern art is the *only* contemporary expression necessary for understanding the present.

⁹⁴ See Ibid., 95. “Simultaneously, Hegel takes a strong stance against the romantic aestheticians by advancing the thesis that the reflection on the work of art is a philosophical task. Whereas the romantics, above all Friedrich Schlegel, had demanded that the reflection on art must itself become aesthetic, Hegel insists on the concept as the only means for aesthetic theory.”

⁹⁵ Burger mentions his indebtedness to Fiedler explicitly. He writes, “Im Anschluss an Kant hat Konrad Fiedler hier bereits den neuen Kunstkritik die gewiesen. Er will weder die Wirkungen eines Kunstwerkes in ihrer psychologischen Bedeutsamkeit noch die praktischen Gestaltungsprobleme untersuchen, sondern die Kunstwerk in sichtbar gemachtes realisiertes Irrationales erkennen, das urch das Vorstellungslebel des Künstlers und die Einheit seines Bewusstesines zu einem selbst einzigartigen und nur aus sich selbst erklärbaren Organismus wird, der aber die Individualität, entwachsen der natürlichen Eigengesetzlichkeit unseres Denken Manifestation des allgemeinen Naturgesetzes wird.” Quoted in, Müller-Lentrod, 71.

⁹⁶ See Christopher Wood, *The Vienna School Reader*, 23. Fiedler's major publications include the essay,

was closely associated with the circle of Hildebrand, Hans von Marées and Anselm Feuerbach and largely active outside of the University system; his most widely read book, *Über den Ursprung der künstlerischen Tätigkeit* [*On the Origin of Artistic Activity*] was published in 1887.⁹⁷

The most notable aspects of Fiedler's theory readily identified in Burger's work rest upon Fiedler's concepts of *Anschauliche Denken*, *künstlerische Erkenntnis* and *Sichbarkeit*. First, Fiedler argued that art writing should be conceived, as much as possible, from the standpoint of the artist. Any externally applied aesthetic position or judgment, according to Fiedler, was based on essentially arbitrary norms engendered by a superficial comprehension of *form* and remained unrelated to art as a creative endeavor.⁹⁸ Art writing, then, should originate with an understanding of the working methods and concerns of artists. Fiedler's association with a group of working artists is indicative of his general theoretical attempt to be closer to the creative process in observation and writing. Likewise, Burger's relationship with Kandinsky, his involvement with the avant-garde in Munich and his pedagogical practices all follow Fiedler's example.⁹⁹

Second, and as will be further discussed later in this chapter, Fiedler argues that external and "arbitrary" aesthetic judgments should be replaced with interpretation that is

"Observations on the Nature and History of Architecture" (1878), translated in Mallgrave and Ikononous, eds., *Empathy Form and Space*, 125-146, *Über die Beuteilung von Werken der Bildenden Kunst* (1876), *Über Kunstinteressen und deren Förderung* (1879), *Moderner Naturalismus und künstlerische Wahrheit* (1881), *Über den Ursprung der künstlerischen Tätigkeit* (1887). For a biographical treatment of Fiedler and his publications, see *Metzler Kunsthistoriker Lexikon*, 88-89.

⁹⁷ Peter Betthausen, ed. *Metzler Kunsthistoriker Lexikon*, 88-89.

⁹⁸ Fiedler's own close association with contemporary artists of his period (Feuerbach, Hildebrand, etc) speaks to his attempt to be close to the work, to the creative effort in its creation. While it cannot be said that Burger imitated this, as is discussed in chapter, Burger's own involvement with the avant-garde is certainly in line with this dictum.

⁹⁹ See chapter two of this thesis for discussion of Burger's association with Kandinsky and pedagogical experimentation.

founded upon the conception of the work of art as a material presentation of perceptual thought [*anschauliche Denken*]. The work of art, for Fiedler and later for Burger, is understood as the creative product of a non-conceptual, non-linguistic way of thinking. Thus the interpretation of art requires that the work be approached on its own terms—the perceptual—rather than as the mere symbol of biographical or historical data. Fiedler outlines precisely this position in his book *Über den Ursprung der künstlerischen Tätigkeit* when he draws the parallel (made also by Burger) between language as the *form* of conceptual cognition just as the result of the artistic act is the form of visual or perceptual cognition:

If we want to maintain that language can signify something real independently of its linguistic form, that could be made the subject of thought and recognition, then we should be able to do this only (one) by remaining naïve realists who accept reality as given without seeing that they have to recognize it first, and (two) by admitting body and mind to be independent parts of human nature related by subordination. If we want to be serious, however, about the insight that we can never own anything real except as the result of a process the scene of which is laid within ourselves...then we can only take language to be the form in which we own reality and not as a means of denotation.¹⁰⁰

As emphasized in this quotation, Fiedler argues that there is no more real content or idea beyond the form itself, for language or for art. This argument elides the possibility of a hard distinction between form and content, an insistence that Burger makes repeatedly throughout *Cézanne und Hodler*.¹⁰¹ As has already been well documented within historiographic literature, Fiedler's insistence on the distinction between the *begrifflich* [conceptual] and the *anschaulich* [perceptual] and the unification of form and content places him squarely within the “neo-Kantian” stream of

¹⁰⁰ Konrad Fiedler, *Schriften über die Kunst*, H. Konnerth ed., (Munich, 1913-1914), quoted in: Ernest K. Muntz, "Three Aspects of German Aesthetic Theory," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 17 no. 3 (March 1959), 207.

¹⁰¹ See Burger, *Cézanne und Hodler*, *Vorwort*. This section on "Inhalt und Form" almost explicitly restates Fiedler's position.

art interpretation. This line of neo-Kantian formalism developed out of the work of Herbart at the beginning of the century.¹⁰² In Herbart's own words, artists did not mean to communicate anything other than what was presented to be seen: "What did the artists of old ... wish to express? They expressed nothing at all. Their thoughts never venture beyond the particular essence of art."¹⁰³ Thus Fiedler's theory, following Herbart, lends support to Burger's bracketing out of biographical and contextual data as it is not *intrinsic* to the work of art as created by perceptual, rather than conceptual, thought.

Kant's influence in 19th-century German aesthetic thought is ubiquitous, but part of Fiedler's complaint against the academy of the 19th century was that Kant's distinction between the conceptual and the perceptual categories of cognition had largely been lost in favor of an overriding, positivistic concern with conceptual thinking, one that was not helpful to the interpretation of art or the development of the perceptual faculty and visual experience.¹⁰⁴ The antidote to this *allzubegriffliche Denken* [all-too-conceptual thinking] was a return to the intrinsically visual nature of artwork, the reconception of the work of art under Fiedler's theory of visibility [*Sichtbarkeit*], that is, the world as visible form.

¹⁰² Again, for an excellent treatment of the formalist schemes that relate to Fiedler's work, see: Mallgrave and Ikonoum, *Empathy Form and Space*: 30-35.

¹⁰³ The proto-formalist Johann Friedrich Herbart (1776-1841) brought these Kantian notions into play with a more empirical emphasis on art's psychological implications. Relevant to this discussion is Herbart's insistence upon aesthetics as it constituted an investigation of form rather than an analysis of expressive content. Herbart jettisoned ethical, emotional or intellectual concerns as intrusions onto the act of aesthetic contemplation [*Betrachtung*]. More than one history of art history has indicated Herbart as a forerunner of what might be considered formalist interpretation: "What did the artists of old who invented the possible forms of the fugue wish to express? Or the even older artists whose hard work created the various column orders? They expressed nothing at all. Their thoughts never venture beyond the particular essence of art." From the German: "Was mögen doch die alten Künstler, welche die möglichen Formen der Fuge entwickelten, oder die noch ältern, deren Fleiß die möglichkeiten Säulenordnungen unterschied, ausdrücken beabsichtigt haben? Gar Nichts wollten sie ausdrücken; ihre Gedanken gingen nicht hinaus, sondern in das innere Wesen der Künste hinein; diejenigen aber, die sich auf Bedeutungen legen, verrathen ihre Scheu von dem Innern, und ihre Vorliebe für den äußern Schein." In Johann Friedrich Herbart, *Kurze Encyklopädie der Philosophie*, ed. G. Hartenstein (1831; Hamburg: Leopold Voss, 1884), vol. 2. Sec. 72, 112-13.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 31.

Fiedler's concept of *Sichtbarkeit* indicates the ability of the subject to cogitate perceptually through active seeing without recourse to language; this perceptual cognition is the autonomous communicative medium of the work of art that cannot be categorized or described as a mimetic object with discursive language and historical interpretation. This theoretical stance encompassed a radical critique of the art historical academy in which Fiedler decried that art historical descriptions concerned themselves only with art as an historical document—one that Burger expounds repeatedly in the *Schack Galerie* guide and *Cézanne und Hodler*.

As Christopher Wood has noted, Fiedler's critique of art history left the historian little room to maneuver. Fiedler drew attention to the existence of a work of art as an “elusive and inexplicably eloquent aesthetic object” but at the same time seemed to limit its use as an historical document.¹⁰⁵ But if all historical connection is removed and the work of art is considered untranslatable from the *anschaulich* to the *begrifflich* (in which art writing must occur), what then could a work of art show? What could possibly be the interpretive line that comes from this apprehension of a work of art as an object that can be grasped as merely visible and cannot be conceptually described? For Fiedler, the work of art could show the perceptive art writer a form of the artist's own philosophical *Erkenntnis*: “A history of art in a proper sense ... [would be] a history that communicates through the art, would reveal its *Erkenntnis* ... [Fiedler] was urgently convinced that the exclusion of all external, content-related perspectives would allow the

¹⁰⁵ Wood, 24.

artwork to be grasped as an autonomous entity of pure visibility [*Sichtbarkeit*].”¹⁰⁶ The *Erkenntnis* of the artist can be understood as the philosophical transmission of the work of art, one that can only be deduced by approaching the work of art in its visibility, its *Sichtbarkeit*. As should become clear in the following discussion of Burger's writing, the interpretation of artistic *Erkenntnis* forms the basis for his art historical method.

Critics who received Burger's book in 1913, however, were more concerned with Burger's positioning of Paul Cézanne and Ferdinand Hodler as equally important artistic antinomies than they were with the complex and perhaps muddled philosophical origins of his theses. In short, they considered the Cézanne-Hodler pairing an extremely questionable one. As was later echoed in Walter Friedlaender's 1919 appraisal of the book, G. Biermann writes the following in his review of *Cézanne und Hodler* for the journal *Cicerone*: “The title alone is fatal because he has compared two artistic personalities, one of whom can surely claim to be an original trailblazer while the other, although he enjoys a well-founded reputation for artistic talent, has brought forth nothing new.”¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁶ Konrad Fiedler as (uncited) and quoted in: Peter Betthausen, ed. *Metzler Kunsthistoriker Lexikon*, 88: “Die akademische Kunstgeschichtsschreibung unterzog F. einer radikalen Kritik, in dem er ihr vorhielt, daß sie die Kunst einseitig historisch und daher nur ihre “Nebenseiten” sehe, währe “eine geschichte der Kunst im eigentlichen Sinne ... eine Geschichte der durch die Kunst vermittelten, offenbarten Erkenntnis” erst noch zu schreiben sei. Not tat nach F.s Überzeugung, unter Auslassung aller äußeren, inhaltlichen Gesichtspunkte und ästhetischen Werturteile das Kunstwerk ale ein autonomes Gebilde reiner Sichtbarkeit zu begreifen.”

¹⁰⁷ G. Biermann “Rezension u.a. über “Cézanne und Hodler,” *Cicerone* V (May 1, 1913): 25-26: “Schon ist der Titel fatal, wel er zwei Künstlerpersönlichkeiten gegenüberstellt, von denen der eine sicher das Recht des originalen Wegweisers beanspruchen kann, während der andere sich als künstlerisches Talent zwar eines begründeten Rufes erfreut, ohne eigentlich neugebärend zu sein.”

Indeed, Burger's criteria for judging the importance of Hodler's work is certainly at odds with the prevailing critical appraisal, then and now.¹⁰⁸ Metzler's encyclopedia entry on Burger ends quite bluntly in stating that whatever the contributive or continued validity of Burger's writing, his privileging of Hodler as an important modern antecedent has been proven frankly erroneous.¹⁰⁹ It is arguable, however, that his valuation of Hodler's work is simply not based on the same criteria as that of his contemporaries. Burger's comparison of Cézanne and Hodler relies little upon the resemblance or dissemblance of their paintings to contemporary work or their contribution of "new" aesthetic approaches. Likewise, Burger does not pursue any concrete biographical connections or accounts given by artists regarding their sources. Rather, as Burger's method required that he translate philosophical meaning from the canvas to reveal the spirit of the contemporary age, his comparison comes to rest on his own, highly subjective interpretation of the individual artists' philosophical *Erkenntnis* of nature.

Burger's notion of the development of art since 1900 considers contemporary artists' new relationship to color and its expression of a new metaphysical state of

¹⁰⁸In other accounts of modern art, Hodler is given little mention. In a review of a retrospective on the year of his death, the reviewer in the *Burlington Magazine* notes Hodler's relative obscurity and writes that despite that Switzerland has produced many better painters since his time. Z. (anon.) *Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 33 no. 184 (July 1913), 36. In another *Burlington Magazine* review, this time from 1959, the reviewer notes that by this time, "The Swiss painter Ferdinand Hodler is hardly known outside his home country." L.D. Ellington, "Review: Die Parallelismus Ferdinand Hodlers" *Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 101 no. 670, (January 1959), 35.

¹⁰⁹Peter H. Feist, "Fritz Burger" in Peter Betthausen, ed. *Metzler Kunsthistoriker Lexikon: Zweihundert Porträts deutschsprachiger Autoren aus vier Jahrhunderten*, (Stuttgart: J.B. Metzler, 1999), 45-47: "B.s. [Burger's] Einsicht, daß sich die für objektiv gehaltenen Entwicklungsschilderungen der "historischen Gelehrsamkeit" ebenfalls "auf ganz subjektive Interessen und erkenntnistheoretische Voraussetzungen gründen" und daß jede neue Kunstbewegung dem, was Überlieferung heißt, einen neuen Inhalt verleiht," ist heute ebenso theoretisch-methodisches Allgemeingut, wie seine These, daß "die Form als anschauliche Verwirklichung bestimmter Denkinhalte, nicht als Mittel zum Zwecke der bloßen Verräumlichung einer sinnlichen Vorstellung" zu werten ist (Einführung). B. [Burger] irrte sich jedoch in der Einschätzung von Hodlers Bedeutung für die weitere kunstentwicklung."

mankind. Beginning with Impressionism, Burger describes artists' attempts to deploy color as a form-making element in order to represent light in all of its variation, pushing against the border of the near-scientific ordering he finds in Pointillism.¹¹⁰ The transition between the Impressionists and the “new” generation concerns the change in color's function; as the artist becomes invested in the expressive quality of color, interest in its function as mere optical appearance wanes.¹¹¹ This shift, for Burger, is found most significantly in the work of Paul Cézanne and Ferdinand Hodler, and so they form the primary pair for comparison in Burger's work.¹¹² The most direct comparison of Cézanne and Hodler's use of color appears at the close of Burger's book in which he literally proposes the two as having entirely opposed use of *Farbenflecken*:

As Cézanne begins from the color as a basic motive [*Grundmotiv*] and moves from there to the borders, so Hodler moves from the borders back to the color tones. With Cézanne the borders are disconnected, the color patches are united; with Hodler the borders are connected, the local color is disconnected. With Hodler, the color is found in its pale sober-mindedness as an abstraction of light and shade, and becomes formed into the mythic through the gestures of the figures....¹¹³

This short paragraph is only one of many points throughout the book in which the relationship between the *Farbenflecken* of Cézanne and Hodler are contrasted.

¹¹⁰ Burger, *Cezanne und Hodler*, 23-25.

¹¹¹ "Ein weiterer wichtiger und vielleicht entscheidender Wandel wird angeführt: weniger die optischen Erscheinungsfunktionen der Farben, sondern deren psychische Ausdrucksmöglichkeiten geraten in das Interesse der Maler." See Hauck, 150. "A further, more important and perhaps more decisive change is treated here..."

¹¹² *Cézanne und Hodler*, 29-33.

¹¹³ Ibid.: "Kam Cézanne von der Farbe als Grundmotiv her und von diesem zur Grenze, so geht Hodler von der Grenze (sic.) des Farbtons aus ... Bei Cézanne trennt die Grenze, vereint der Farbfleck; bei Hodler vereint die Grenze, trennt die Lokalfarbe.. Bei Cézanne liegt daher das Mythische in der Farbe selbst, während die Figur in psychischer Zuständigkeit wird. Bei Hodler tritt die Farbe in heller Nüchternheit als ein Abstraktum von Licht und Schatten auf und wird das Mythische durch die Gesten der Figuren...gestaltet..."

In applying his theory of the *Farbenprobleme*, Burger assesses in which way Cézanne and Hodler's use of color reveals their divergent *Erkenntnis* of nature through their construction of the image's final unity. As Burger explains earlier in the book, in Hodler's work, the "Idea" of Hodler, his mimetic expression and the appearance of form are one and one and the same.¹¹⁴ Thus in works such as *Tag*, *Morgen* and *Abend*, Hodler does not depict the sunrise or sunset simply through glowing color (fig. 1.4). Instead the figures in the composition, through their poses, how they fall asleep or come awake, builds upon his unity of painterly technique.¹¹⁵ Far beyond a merely pleasing aesthetic unity, Burger describes Hodler's treatment of technique and motif as bringing the image to a transcendental level of unity; the figure is no longer an object in space, but now exists in total harmony with its environment. As the expression of a *Weltanschauung*, Hodler's inseparability of color application, motif, and expression is, to Burger, the means through which he channels the existence of a supernatural will, presenting the eternal [*Ewigkeit*] in the finite space of the canvas.¹¹⁶¹¹⁷

Burger's description of Cézanne's work also rests on an interpretation of his ability to bring the color and motif of the work to a total unity of form. In contrast to Hodler, however, Burger claims that the human figure is not of particular interest to Cézanne. Here Burger references Cézanne's *Great Bathers* (fig. 1.5). Cézanne, he argues,

¹¹⁴ Burger, *Cézanne und Hodler*, 36.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 36.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 36 "der Tag ist eine nichtkörperliche wirkende Idee, der die Figuren die durch eine angedeutete Landschaft zusammengebunden werden ... Damit vollzieht sich ihm bildsinn das Metaphysische; der schöpferische Wille der nature, ihre Bewegung erscheint als Gesetz der menschlichen Existenz... nur eine Erscheinungsform der Ewigkeit."

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 51.

paints his human figures in a way that is akin to animals or inorganic material.¹¹⁸

Although perhaps not in direct reference, Burger's description can be compared to Kandinsky's own regarding Cézanne in *Über das Geistige in der Kunst* when he writes that, "[Cézanne] handles the objects like he does the people, because inner life is to be seen in all things."¹¹⁹ In reference to Cézanne's *Bathers* (1898–1905), Burger comments that the figures are never developed with an interest in their details but are treated as another "colored piece" in the whole of nature, "stark contrasts between color accents are entirely absent and his unity is achieved through the equalizing of all parts."¹²⁰ In his treatment of the human figure and the landscape, both in motif and color, Burger ascribes to Cézanne an essentially pantheistic *Weltanschauung*; the equalization of foreground and background with color, and this equal treatment of human figure and their environment translates, analogically, to a philosophic position towards nature.¹²¹ Here, Burger's close reading of technique, a rigorous observation of the canvas, did not preclude its extension into what would be considered philosophical speculation.

...For both, every individual in nature is only a creation of an extra-individual [*überpersönlich*] creative force, one voiced in every particular part [*Besonderheit*] of its appearance and relationship within its appearance. Cézanne simply comes to it—what we call the mind [*Psyche*]¹²¹—through the sensual, while Hodler reaches a unity of the appearance of motif by starting from the expressive movement of the form and its

¹¹⁸ See Ibid., 64.

¹¹⁹ Wassily Kandinsky, *Über die Geistige in der Kunst* (Bern, 1956), 50. "Er behandelt diese Sachen ebenso wie den Menschen, da er das innere Leben überall zu sehen begabt war."

¹²⁰ Burger, *Cézanne und Hodler*, 68: "Er stellt diese (Figuren) völlig ohne Pose dar, seine Figuren interessieren nicht in ihren einzelheiten, sie wirken nur in und mit dem Ganzen der nature, als deren farbiger Teil sie erscheinen." [(Cézanne) presents the figures entirely un-posed, his figures are interesting not for their individual details, they make their effect in and work through the whole of nature in which they appear only as another colored part.]

¹²¹ Ibid., 84. "Die Wiese und die Körper, die Wolken und die Bäume besitzen das gleiche Gestaltungsmotive, es ist derselbe Wille, durch den sie sich formen und ihre form ist die Verkörperung dieses Willens." [The lawn and the bodies, the clouds and the trees possess the same motif of form, it is the same will through which they are form and their form is the embodiment of this Will.]

psychic character. Thus in Hodler's art, the figure comes forward and the landscape recedes.¹²²

Naturally, the identification of Hodler's work as transcendental and mysterious and Cézanne's work as pantheistic appears to be typical of attributions based on their respective nationalities. The selection of Hodler, despite the fact that he is Swiss, begs the question of whether Burger is attempting to construct a "new" lineage for modern art removed from the apparent influence of the French post-impressionists and cubists. Cézanne and Hodler's national origin—how each artist represents the contemporary spirit of the French or German mind, respectively—is discussed in the final section of Burger's book. In this chapter, "Rassenpsychologisches und Farbenproblem" Burger states that the question of Cézanne's "Frenchness" or Hodler's "Germanicness" must be addressed because he is "no friend to the so-called Volk-psychology, whose greatest advocate, Wundt, is of such far-reaching influence ... that the issue cannot be passed over without comment."¹²³¹²⁴

Burger puts forth an unremarkable gloss on the contemporary influence of French art in Germany in the period, but comments largely without pejorative inflection on the difference between the German and French mind. He writes that "the Frenchman is, as a

¹²² Ibid., 34: "...bei beides ist jedes Individuum in der Natur nur Geschöpf jenes überpersönlichen Schöpferwillens, der sich überall in der Besonderheit seiner Erscheinung und Erscheinungsbeziehungen äußert. Nur kommt Cézanne mehr vom Sinnlichen zu dem, was Psyche heißt, während Hodler, ausgehend von der Ausdrucksbewegung der Gestalt und ihrer psychischen Determination, zu dem vereinheitlichen Erscheinungsmotiv der Bildgestalt gelangt. In Hodlers Kunst tritt daher die menschliche Figur in den Vordergrund des Interesses und das Landschaftliche tritt zurück."

¹²³ Ibid., 211.: "Manche lehrreiche Untersuchungen über Rassen-psychologie ließen sich hier anstellen, und es wäre nicht uninteressant, die Frage aufzuwerfen, wie sich, gegenüber dem Franzosen Cézanne, diese völlig andersartige Formulieren der modernen Weltanschauungsprobleme bei Hodler erklären ließe. Der Verfasser versteht, kein Freund der sogenannten Völker-psychologie zu sein, deren größter Vertreter, Wundt, von so weitragendem Einfluß auf die jüngere und ältere Generation gewesen ist, er möchte aber doch an diesen Problemen nicht ganz achtlos vorübergehen."

¹²⁴ Later editions of *Cézanne und Hodler* do not contain this final section on "Rassenpsychologie."

thinker, always an artist, while the German, as an artist, is gladly a philosopher” and notes that modern French philosophy is strongly influenced by German Romanticism, just as German artists look to French art for the manifestation of such thought in art.¹²⁵ For Burger, if there is a distinction between the artistic-philosophical outlook of the two nations, it is the German “wonder at the multiplicity of existence, what is unknown and what is subconscious,” an expression of the infinite he does not find at play in the work of French artists.¹²⁶ To this end, he cites the work of Cézanne and Picasso as antipodal to Böcklin and Hodler. Again, as art is an expression of artistic thought, Burger returns to the *Farbenprobleme*, but now in its application to this expression of national essence. In Hodler's work, “the colors retain a German, headstrong individualism, but with Cézanne a Roman dispassion, logic and unity trumps any Romanticism.”¹²⁷

For all of his commentary regarding the danger of approaching artists as representative of a national style, as Burger's analysis moves further into this “exploration” of national spirit through color, his work begins to square with that of conservative art critics of the era.¹²⁸ Compare Burger's comment on French and German color to the following, written in 1912 by Paul Schubring as a critique of French Impressionist shown at the *Kölner Sonderbundaussstellung*:

¹²⁵ Ibid., 212: “der Franzose ist auch als Denker immer Künstler, der deutsche Künstler so gerne Philosoph.”

¹²⁶ Ibid., 213: “Grade das, was dem Deutschen so wertvoll erscheint, der Dämmerchein des Ungewissen und Unbewußten, das Wunder der Vielheit der Existenzen, der Wechsel und Wandel der Empfindungen tritt beim Franzosen zurück.”

¹²⁷ Ibid., 215: “Bei Hodler hat die Farbe ihren germanischen, eigensinnigen Individualismus bewahrt, bei Cézanne romanische Sachlichkeit, Logik, Einheit trotz aller Romantik.”

¹²⁸ It is worth repeating here what Burger had written in the previous year regarding national origin: “To extend sentimental, patriotic enthusiasm into the realm of art is not only asinine but tasteless. So long as the “German” in him is sought, Dürer's artistic achievements will not be understood. But this romantic delusion seems not yet fully exterminated... Who looks for the Englishman in Hamlet, the German in Faust or the Dutchman in Rembrandt in order to grasp their meaning? To insist upon their national or personal character is to rob them of their freedom.”

The world of Impressionism is, in its innermost essence, still un-German. It is and will remain an import from France. Whatever is within the people there, who, like all Romans, live from the religion of objects, this sense could only be imparted to us violently, willfully and impersonally because we [the Germans] are simply expressive people.¹²⁹

The question that cannot be elided in response to *Cézanne und Hodler* is whether or not Burger has actually created a methodology for understanding art *von Unten* rather than *von Oben* or, instead, if his interest in describing the contemporary *Geist* has led to the mere overlay of philosophically derived concepts onto a more commonplace interest in artistic technique and color in painting.¹³⁰ In some cases, it is difficult to be sympathetic, as the latter appears almost overwhelmingly to be the case. Certainly the assumption of an analogical relationship between the color equivalency between the figures and ground in Cézanne's bathers and a pantheistic spiritualism latent in the mind of the artist is precisely the kind of *intuitive* leap that Burger attempts to make. What to an historian like Wölfflin may have appeared to be essentially *unwissenschaftlich*, the intuitive, analogical leap between technique and *Weltanschauung* that forms the basis for Burger's methodology in *Cézanne und Hodler*, is precisely the leap, the risk, that Burger urges art historian's to take when confronted with the intranslatability of the image to text and the sustained exteriority of biography and context.¹³¹ But Burger, despite his jettisoning of biographical and cultural-historical data, is not willing to make the jump

¹²⁹ Schubing, Paul, "Die Sonderbund-Ausstellung in Köln," in *Die Hilfe* 18 (1912): 559. "Was ... die Welt des Impressionismus ist ihrem innersten Wesen nach undeutsch. Sie ist und bleibt Import von Frankreich her. Was dort in dem Volk ... die wie alle Romanen von der Religion der Dinge leben ... das könnte bei uns die war nun einmal Ausdrucksmenschen sind, nur gewaltsam, absichtlich und unpersönlich sich mitteilen."

¹³⁰ This quote from the opening pages of Gustav Fechner's book that Burger quotes in the final pages of *Cézanne und Hodler*. See, Gustav Fechner, *Vorschule der Aesthetic* (1876; Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1897), 1. Also quoted in: Mallgrave, Harry F. *Empathy Form & Space*, 14. "In his famous opening remarks Fechner attacked all previous aesthetic theorizing *von Oben* (from above, from universals to particulars) and proposed to establish a new aesthetics *von Unten* (from below) on the basis of empirical evidence."

¹³¹ See footnote 72.

from doubt (in existing methodologies) to faith (in his own intuitions) alone. As already discussed, the conclusions in *Cézanne und Hodler* rely heavily on existing philosophical construction such as those identified in Hegel and Fiedler.

Perhaps this is due, in part, to the very different role that philosophy played in early 20th century German thought when compared to early 21st century use of theory. As Idealist philosophers (Hegel, Kant) were fundamentally concerned with the ordering of the human mind and, as Burger generally rejected psychological theories, the former were perhaps the most attractive philosophical armature. Burger likely viewed his own work as an extension of philosophy into the realm of art, not as a contrived application. Thus for Burger, the final consonance between the solutions he provides to the *Farbenproblem* in *Cézanne und Hodler* and existing philosophical speculation may have reinforced the validity of his conclusions rather than invalidated the originality of the thesis. Hegel's theories of *Erkenntnis* and *Geist* were not “tools” in the sense that a contemporary historian might treat critical theory as an interpretive wedge. Rather, one might speculate that for Burger, the use of philosophical structures could support the attempt to create an intuitive and responsive scholarship of art [*Kunstwissenschaft*] in the way that a historiography of interpretation or a hagiography of artistic biography would not.

Turning to Burger's final book, *Die Einführung in die Moderne Kunst*, my discussion of his text considers the re-orientation of Burger's subjective-intuitive methodology almost solely towards addressing the *Anteil der Nationen* (the stake of nations) in modern art. Here, Burger positions himself not only as a contemporary

subject, but also as a writer within the stream of the contemporary spirit as he characterizes it.

Einführung in die Moderne Kunst

The beginning of the war not only disrupted Burger's teaching work at the University of Munich, but also his plans for an encyclopedic history of world art, the *Systematik der Kunstwissenschaft*. As Burger had begun to conceive of the project in 1913, the *Systematic* was to be a multi-author work, a modern, scientific and complete encyclopedia of art. The series was to contain a contemporary methodological overview in the first book and a history of the discipline in the second; the additional eighteen volumes would provide a comprehensive treatment of Islamic, Oceanic, Indian, African, Ancient and modern European art. Burger's plan for a world history of art was continued despite his death. Under the direction of Adolf Brinckmann at the University of Karlsruhe, the Athenaion-Verlag in Neubabelberg (Potsdam) published the series, although it took nearly twenty-three years for the entire series to come to fruition. Under a new title and editorship, twenty-four volumes Athenaion published under as part of the series, *Handbuch der Kunstwissenschaft*, including Nikolaus Pevsner's volume on Baroque and Rococo Italian painting, Wilhelm Pinder's volume on late German medieval and Renaissance painting and Paul Frankl's volume on medieval architecture.¹³² As editor

¹³² See publications: Paul Frankl, *Baukunst des Mittelalters; die frühmittelalterliche und romanische Baukunst* (Potsdam: Athenaion Verlag, 1926); Nikolaus Pevsner, *Barokmalerei in den romanischen Ländern* (Potsdam: Athenaion Verlag, 1928); Wilhelm Pinder, *Die deutsche Plastik vom ausgehenden Mittelalter bis zum Ende der Renaissance*, (Potsdam: Athenaion Verlag, 1924).

of the series, Burger was to write the volumes on German painting from the Middle Ages to the end of the Renaissance as well as the major volume on 19th and 20th century art, originally to be entitled, *Die Kunst des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts*.¹³³ After his enlistment, Burger continued to write his contribution to the *Systematik* while stationed variously around Germany until his death in 1916.¹³⁴ Combining the unfinished manuscript with writings sent by Burger from the war, the volume was revised by his wife and appeared posthumously under the title, *Einführung in die Moderne Kunst*, independently of the *Handbuch* series; it was published by Athenaeon in 1917.¹³⁵ Burger's book went into a second printing in 1917 by the Athenaeon-Verlag and received an introduction and afterword by Albert Brinckmann as well as further revision from Carl von Lorck. Remarkable commercial success followed. Between its initial publication and the final printing in 1931 nearly fifty thousand copies of Burger's book were sold, making it Burger's most successful publication and the most widely disseminated book on modern art in its time.¹³⁶

What sets Burger's *Einführung in die Moderne Kunst* apart methodologically from the *Schackgalerie* guide and *Cézanne und Hodler* is its complete abandonment of the *Farbenprobleme*, his careful observation of color as the basis for his metaphysical

¹³³ See Hauck, 225.

¹³⁴ Kräubig, 1. "Bekannt geblieben ist er als der Begründer des "handbuchs der Kunstwissenschaft," das nach [Burgers] Tod von Albert Erich Brinckmann fortgeführt wurde."

¹³⁵ Hauck, 222. "An diesem Beitrag hat er dann weiter während seiner Frontzeit bis in das Jahr 1916 hinein gearbeitet und eine erste Einzellieferung muss noch 1915 erfolgt sein. Durch seinen Tod blieb aber auch diese Werk unvollendet. Unter title "Einführung in die moderne Kunst" wurde Burgers Teilband – von seiner Frau überarbeitet – nach 1917 separat als Ergänzungsband des Handbuchs weiterverlegt und er.

¹³⁶ The inner cover of the final edition of Burger's *Einführung* lists that the number of copies per printing, the approximate number of fifty thousand is also printed in Betthausen, Peter, ed. *Metzler Kunsthistoriker Lexicon*, 45. "Die Einführung erreichte bis 1931 eine Gesamtauflage von fast 50 000 Exemplaren und wurde damit wohl zum seinerzeit am weitesten verbreiteten deutschen Buch über die neuen Kunstauffassungen."

speculation on artistic *Erkenntnis*. Albert Brinckmann describes Burger's break with art historical scholarship in the afterword of the book:

Burger's subjective desire for expression, borne of a deep consciousness of existence, is what separates him from a true historian.... Instead of working objectively as an historian, he worked subjectively (*subjektiviert*) with the highest ability. He created the character (*Typ*) of the scholarly expressionist.¹³⁷

We might ask what Brinckmann means when he writes that Burger *subjektiviert*. First, as a book written on contemporary art, Burger's *Einführung in die Moderne Kunst* attempts to reconcile new movements within an historical framework, not only to garner support from an audience suspicious of the "new tendencies" but also to prove that art historical method did not require an historical distance upon which to found its interpretations. For Burger, the lack of historical distance [*Abstand*] meant the illusion of objectivity would be entirely lost and he assumed the production of a contemporary art history would be met with doubt from within the establishment. In the forward to the *Einführung* he writes:

Of course the experts will still shake their heads in disapproval since the historical distance necessary for a systematic [*wissenschaftlich*] consideration of contemporary art will always be lacking. The edifice of historical scholarship, of course, wants to measure the value of both artwork and artist based on their 'effects', on their significance for the development of art.¹³⁸ We agree with the youth, that in the final analysis, any such narrative of development is based entirely on subjective interests and epistemological suppositions and belongs only to the obsolete and conveniently exploitable spiritual state of the present [*Geistesbestand der Gegenwart*].¹³⁹ Thus such a narrative is no less subjective than an artistic ideology that adopts the concerns and epistemological foundations of the present, entirely conscious of their world historical value [*weltgeschichtlichen Wertes*]. Conveying these values is a difficult task, especially since

¹³⁷ A.E. Brinckmann, "Nachwort," in Burger, *Einführung in die Moderne Kunst*, 134-135: "Diese subjektivistische Ausdrucksverlangen Burgers, getragen von einem starken Daseinbewußtsein, wird ihn stets von dem echten Historiker scheiden ... Statt als Historiker zu objektivieren, subjektivierte er mit höchste Kraft. Er schuf den Typ des wissenschaftlichen Expressionisten..."

¹³⁸ Here it only says "Entwicklung" – just, "Development" but this sounds quite unclear in English, and so I added, "the development of art."

¹³⁹ This sentence, "...die letzten Endes zumeist nur zu einem veralteten und bequem zu verwertenden Geistesbestand der Gegenwart gehört.." could also be "And, when all is said and done, belong to the aging and comfortably utilized existence of the contemporary spirit."

certain dogmatic perspectives informed by schoolboy logic must be combated in both experts and laymen alike.¹⁴⁰

Burger admits here that his desire to break with developmental histories and to adopt the “subjective” stance of an artist is a risk and that to fully abandon the guise of objectivity is to throw oneself into the struggle, to walk “into danger.”¹⁴¹ As far as this amounts to a methodology, to Burger *subjektivieren* also meant embracing the philosophy, the tone and the “state of mind” [*Geistesbestand*] of the present, one already caught in the throes of a world war.¹⁴² Indeed, rather than attempting to translate the *Erkenntnis* of the artist with relation to nature from color-patch to *Weltanschauung*, Burger appears to have adopted the pose of the artist himself, speaking with and for contemporary art, without what appears to be any active interpretation of the object.¹⁴³ Burger's pitched and tumbling prose weaves between brief moments of recognizable description and willfully “poetic” outbursts. As a mode of art historical writing, Burger's work in the *Einführung* might be characterized as belletristic, that is, as art writing fashioned to create its own aesthetic affect consonant with the art it is describing. Here

¹⁴⁰ Burger, *Einführung in die Moderne Kunst*, I. “Die Kundigen werden freilich vielfach noch immer tadelnd das Haupt schütteln, denn um die Kunst der Gegenwart wissenschaftlich zu behandeln, fehlt der historische Abstand. Die historische Gelehrsamkeit will ja den Wert des Kunstwerks und der Künstler aus ihren Wirkungen ermessen, aus ihrer Bedeutung für die Entwicklung. Wir sind mit den Jüngern der Meinung, daß solche Entwicklungsschilderung ... die letzten Endes zumeist nur zu einem veralteten und bequem zu verwertenden Geistesbestand der Gegenwart gehören und deshalb nicht weniger subjektiv sind als eine künstlerische Weltanschauung, die diese Interessen und erkenntnistheoretischen Grundlagen der Gegenwart mit vollem Bewußtsein in der Überzeugung ihres weltgeschichtlichen Werten übernimmt.”

¹⁴¹ Ibid.: “Deshalb ist es gefährlich, solche Bücher zu schreiben, in denen nicht so der Stoff behandelt wird, wie dies nach gewohnten Grundsätzen üblich ist. Man begibt sich in den Kampf. Soll nicht ein Historiker überhaupt jenseits des Kampfes der Tagesmeinungen stehen, läuft er nicht Gefahr den Ruf seiner wissenschaftlichen “Objektivität” zu verlieren, wenn er gewissermaßen in diesem Kampfe Partei ergreift?” For translation of this passage, see attached Appendix, translation of chapters one and two of *Einführung in die Moderne Kunst*.

¹⁴² For a full translation of the introduction and first chapter of Burger's book, please see the appendix of this thesis, an annotated translation of a section of *Einführung in die Moderne Kunst*.

¹⁴³ It should also be noted that Burger's text contains many quotations from artists, including Hodler and Kandinsky. See Appendix.

Burger's prose appears intended to create the same aesthetic impression as the figures in the book; the text becomes less descriptive or interpretive as it is an exercise in accompaniment through rhetorical effect. Burger's attempt to recreate the dynamism, energy and fervor he finds in expressionist works through historical writing is found in passages that accompany Marc's paintings, Kandinsky's woodcuts or, for example, when adjacent to Robert Delaunay's *Tour d'Eiffel* (fig. 1.7, 1.8 and 1.9).

At the Eiffel tower, all is power, will, victory, triumph. The spirit that creates its own its own substances ... by means of an enormous straining of forces, the exulting symbol of irresistible spiritual energy.... With brutal force, the four-footed giant penetrates the earth, heave itself aloft and, out of a pressurized mass of collected energy, shoots sky-high in a graceful curve, transparent like fine filigree....¹⁴⁴

As noted by Christopher Wood, this expressionist-belletristic mode aligns Burger's work with both Max Dvorak (1874–1921) and Worringer. “This sort of art history,” Wood writes, “is sometimes characterized as “expressionist” in part because it originates in the willfulness and creativity of the interpreter, in part because it understands art to be the expression of culture in some quasi-poetic fashion.”¹⁴⁵ Indeed in the first few pages of the *Einführung*, Burger quotes freely from Goethe's *Faust* and Nietzsche's *Zarathustra*, writing what amount to a parable of creative rebirth rather than a recognizable introduction to modern art. Here this language is at play in a description of the new spirit of the age destroying the teachings of *Wissenschaft*:

¹⁴⁴ Burger, *Einführung in die Moderne Kunst*, 17. See Appendix of this text for translation of the rest of the section.

¹⁴⁵ Wood, 30. Wood goes on to note that Wilhelm Pinder, another contemporary of Burger's who also wrote one of the volumes for the *Systematic der Kunstwissenschaft*, wrote similarly belletristic, rapturous prose in his descriptions of medieval German art that were widely read in the Nazi period. Wood aligns this belletristic mode with a certain anti-conceptual position that is *anti-Begriffliche Denken*. In 1939 this position fed into Pinder's own open anti-Semitism when he writes in 1939 that the removal of the Jews from the academy will rid art history of its excessively "conceptual" thinking [*allzu begriffliche Denken*].

There came a large and young flock, sturdy, with a holy belief in a higher power, one that lives in and with them, leading them together, bestowing victory and power onto them. They carried the divine promise with them and blew the trumpets of judgment anew. And the walls burst, within which the philistines, in lush contentment, had isolated their smaller world from the world outside, caring nothing for those who languished and starved for the free, white light of the spirit.... The world of wonders slowly began to glow again. Life came once more into those races, smashed and sunken in ruin ... and in the chaotic commotion, the spirit of the new life raged over the grave of [the spirit of the] old life.¹⁴⁶

Precisely what, in this passage, is Burger describing? Taking the text of the book as a whole, it becomes apparent that he is conjuring the feeling of modern art as the rebirth of culture, reclaimed from the rationality and moral desuetude of the academy. The torpor of the arts in the late 19th century was a common theme in art writing around the turn of the century, but here the rupture of modern art is communicated in a poetic sense, as a fable, with belletristic, literary stylings that borrow from Goethe and Nietzsche.¹⁴⁷ As Rolf Hauck describes the *Einführung*, "To use such language as the introduction to a scholarly text is surely astounding, and yet Burger certainly hit upon a nerve in the period, one that found the emergence of a new period of art whose views were a renunciation of positivism, rationalism, empiricism and specialization."¹⁴⁸ As was also noted by Jens Kraubig in his address given on the 70th anniversary of Burger's death,

¹⁴⁶ *Einführung in die Moderne Kunst*, 20: " Da kam eine junge, große Schar, hartknochig, erfüllt von einem heiligen Glauben an eine Höhere Macht, die in ihnen und mit ihnen lebt, sie gemeinsam leitet, ihnen Kraft und Sieg verleiht. Sie trugen die göttliche Verheißung mit sich und bliesen aufs neue die Posaunen des Gerichtes. Und die Mauern barsten, in denen Philister in sattem Behagen ihre kleinere Welt von der großen draußen abgegrenzt hatten, unbekümmert um die, die nach dem freien weiten Lichte des Geistes schmachteten und darben ... Da leuchtete langsam wieder die Welt des Wunders auf. Es kam Leben in jene Splitter ... und im chaotischen Getriebe tobte der Geist des neuen Lebens über dem Totenfelde..."

¹⁴⁷ For a discussion of the "spiritual torpor" of the arts as described in German art-writing circa 1900, see Mallgrave and Ikonoumos's introduction, *Empathy Form and Space*, 1-51. It should also be noted in the *Einführung*, that Burger's text in the opening chapter is at times almost indistinguishable from the (un-cited) quotations from Nietzsche.

¹⁴⁸ Hauck, 225 "Diese Sprache als Einleitung für ein kunstwissenschaftliches Thema ist sicher erstaunlich und doch traf Burger damit zweifellos den Nerv der Zeit, der den Anbruch einer neuen Kunstepoche und deren Auffassungen als Abkehr von Positivismus, Rationalismus, Empirismus und Spezialistentum empfand."

“Without questions, at the latest it was in 1915 that Burger broke entirely with scholarship [*Wissenschaft*]
—in his view a rationalist, philistine doxa of the University.”¹⁴⁹

Nietzsche and the *Anteil der Nationen*

In Burger's introduction, the juxtaposition of wood-cuts from Kandinsky with German 16th-century woodcuts complements the cosmic, mythical language with which he opens this text as one written for the “rebirth” of a lost creative spirit (fig. 1.7, 1.9).¹⁵⁰ Burger's comparison of contemporary German art (namely Kandinsky and Marc) with the Gothic was not a novel turn but an already well-established trope by the time of the *Einführung*'s publication.¹⁵¹ Burger would no doubt have been familiar with Worringer's 1911 publication, *Formproblem der Gothik*, for example, where the author also sought the psychological underpinnings of the Gothic style. Likewise, this same argument for the rebirth of a German creative energy is present in Kandinsky and Marc's *Blaue Reiter Almanac*.¹⁵² As Burger describes it, the communion between the Gothic and the contemporary is a unification of two ages of “free spirits,” similar not only in their forms but also in their belief of a total union of all living things, the reunion of mankind with nature and the fusion of artistic form and content.¹⁵³

¹⁴⁹ Kraubig, 1. “Ohne Frage hat Burger spätestens mit der Wissenschaft – dem aus seiner Sicht rationalistischen und philistershaften Universitätsgelehrtentum – völlig gebrochen.”

¹⁵⁰ In the final document of the thesis I will include reproductions of these plates as well as reference the reader to the index where the first 45 pages of the book are translated.

¹⁵¹ See Magdalena Bushart, *Der Geist der Gothik und die expressionistische Kunst: Kunstgeschichte und Kunsttheorie 1911-1925* (Munich: Schreiber, 1990), 28.

¹⁵² Wilhelm Worringer, *Formprobleme der Gothik*, (Munich: Piper, 1911).

¹⁵³ *Einführung in die Moderne Kunst*, 26-27: “Deshalb ist am Ende des Jahrhunderts wie am Anfang die

Burger contrasts this “Gothic spirit” with the “Classical spirit” throughout the *Einführung*: the Gothic serves as a foil for the Renaissance, the Romantic for the Neoclassical, Symbolism for Impressionism and finally, Expressionism for Cubism.¹⁵⁴ For Burger, the irrational, romantic and transcendental German mind alone has produced the “*Ich*,” that is, the affirmation of the subject that might impress its fully formed *Erkenntnis* into a work of art of the highest order. “With van Gogh and Nietzsche there is a full renunciation of the conventional ordering of existence.... With prophetic fervor, both Nietzsche and Van Gogh project their own *Ich* out into the cosmos.”¹⁵⁵ Not surprisingly, Burger expands his thesis of the creative Gothic-Germanic spirit as a new world spirit in his section, “*Anteil der Nationen*” or, the Stake of Nations. Here, Germany is literally framed as the destiny of culture, its *Geist* unbound, cosmic, universal.¹⁵⁶ France, hedged in by its rationalism, pedantic academicism and sensual indulgence has already passed through its era of cultural dominance, producing work in which “the

Kunst dem des Mittelalters so nahe gerückt, nur ist die Formgesetzlichkeit von ihrem spezifischen kirchlichen Inhalte befreit worden ... das weltgeschichtlich bedeutsamste Ergebnis der Kulturellen Entwicklung des 19. Und 20. Jahrhunderts: Die Erweiterung der menschlich-sozialen Gemeinschaftsidee zu einer Idee von der Gemeinschaft alles lebendigen und seine Bestimmtheit durch das Wesen des Absoluten selbst...das Gell nicht mehr der unterscheidende Besitz des Menschen im Gegensatz zur nature sein, sondern die schöpferische Gesetzlichkeit, die in jedem Naturorganismus sich findet.”

¹⁵⁴ Ibid. In reference to Girieud he writes, “Auf dieser Grundlage [Klassizismus] wurde die Dogmatisch-rationalistischen Kunstanschauung geboren, die das geistige und künstlerische Leben des Menschen als ein Produkt der geschichtlichen Überlieferung ansahen....Die Wissenden, die Gebildeten, wurden so vielfach zu einer falschen Aristokratie des Geistes...” On Cubism he writes: “In dem rationalisierten system der vernünftigen Beziehungen der Dinge unter sich findet der Klassizismus am Anfang des Jahrhunderts das Absolute im Grundgesetz der Einheitlichkeit endlichen und unpersönlichsten Daseins. In der Individualität und Irrationalität dieser Beziehungen entdeckt der Romantiker das Absolute im schöpferischen Ich des Künstlers. Der klassische Dichter, sagt Schlegel, gehe im Stoffe auf, der romantische schwebt als souveräne Persönlichkeit über ihm, er vernichtet den Stoff durch die Form. In ihr realisiert sich das “Ich.”

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.: “bei van Gogh wie bei Nietzsche geschieht eine völlige Abkehr von der üblichen Ordnung des Daseins. Mit prophetischer Leidenschaft ... projizieren Nietzsche und van Gogh ihr eigenes “Ich” hinein in den Kosmos.”

¹⁵⁶ With regard to Germany's Anteil, see: Ibid., 47-53: “Für den Deutschen ist vor allem das Erbe Schicksal seiner Kultur geworden.”

world, thought and life appears as grandiose machinery in which the organ of the spirit disappears.”¹⁵⁷¹⁵⁸ And while Burger dubs England the “homeland of civilizing modern ideas” he states bluntly that “behind its civilizing might there is no force of an original culture” as it clings to the dead weight of social convention.¹⁵⁹

In comparing these statements to earlier comments from *Cézanne und Hodler* and the *Schackgalerie*, it appears that Burger has pivoted regarding the question of national origin as an interpretive frame. As he wrote in 1913, “how many cults have been wrought and how much unhappiness brought to the good with the word “*Heimatkunst*” and its false sentimentality?”¹⁶⁰ But for Burger, as for other writers of his generation, the agonistic forces at work were not simply those between political borders, between historically-constructed *Heimats*, but between contemporary manifestations of *Kultur* and *Zivilization*, between *Leben* and *Décadence*. In 1914, the German novelist Thomas Mann made this same argument for the expression of creative vitality found in *Geist* as it produces *Kultur*. Mann aligned *Leben*, *Kunst*, *Natur* and *Deutschland* against the over-intellectualized, decadence of *Zivilisation*, *Literatur*, and *Frankreich*.¹⁶¹ Thus the victory

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 93 “Die Welt, das Denken, das Leben erscheint als grandioser Mechanismus, in dem der Organismus der Seele verschwindet.”

¹⁵⁸ See also: Ibid., 41-43.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 40: “Die Heimat moderner zivilisatorischer Ideen ist England ... Hinter Englands zivilisatorischer Gewalt steht nicht die Macht einer originalen Kultur. Ihr haftet das Bleigewicht sozialer Konventionen an. Von allen großen Kulturnationen besitzt England das schwächste kulturelle Wachstum...” [The homeland of modern civilizing ideas is England...[but] behind England's civilizing might there is no force of an original culture. It clings to the dead weight of social convention].

¹⁶⁰ See Burger, *Cézanne und Hodler*, “Vorwort.”

¹⁶¹ See Thomas Mann, “Gedanken im Kriege,” *Die Neue Rundschau* 25 (1914), 1471-84, repr. in Thomas Mann, *Gesammelte Werke*, 13 vols (Frankfurt a.M: Fischer, 1974), XIII, 527-45. Quoted in: Nicholas Martin, “Fighting a Philosophy: The Figure of Nietzsche in British Propaganda of the First World War”, *Modern Languages Review*, 98, 2 (April, 2003), 371. “With his overarching antithetical concepts of “Geist” and “Leben,” Mann assigns “Krieg” to “Leben” in this essay long with other expressions of creative vitality, namely “Kultur,” “Kunst,” “Natur” and “Deutschland.” Ranger against these ... are the over-intellectualized, decadent notions of “Zivilisation,” “Literatur,” and “Frankreich,”

of the creative vitality found in the German *Geist* is not framed as a “national” one, but as a spiritual upheaval in which German hegemony would pave the way for a universal triumph of the “human spirit.” Truly, this is a distinction that, in the wake of the Second World War, could be quite handily dismissed. In addressing World War One as a path to spiritual and cultural renewal Burger writes:

The enchanting conflagration of war establishes the bloody world-historical background for its [Germany's] new national prominence and world-historical mission. The privation and prevailing characteristics of the time require new and deeply resonating symbols.... Therefore a German book should be a fair-minded matter and the history of art should be practice, not from a German, but more than ever before, from a world-historical standpoint. The German spirit will drag [*ziehen*] its inherited and noble symbols with cords [*Fäden*] of reconciliation over the freshly dug graves. And, as at the beginning of the last century, with Beethoven's “Be Embraced, Millions,” today that [German spirit] will shout out to all the peoples of the world, stronger, firmer and prouder, the slogan of the new age: the community of mankind [*Menscheitsgemeinschaft*].¹⁶²

It is not necessary to look much further than the ubiquitous influence of Friedrich Nietzsche—between the turn of the century and the outbreak of war—to understand how the language of Burger's *Einführung in die Moderne Kunst* and his break with scholarly writing, would have sounded in concert with both popular sentiment in the press and similar rhetorical positions as espoused by artists and writers.¹⁶³ As Barbara Besmirch writes, the notion of the World War I as a conflict of *Kulturr*, one with dimensions greater than those of mere political engagement, was mobilized in part due to the widespread influence of Nietzsche-derived sentiment.¹⁶⁴ As an artist whose work (and life) was of interest to Burger, it is worth noting Franz Marc's own engagement with this Nietzschean attitude. It is precisely this extra-political dimension to the war that is

¹⁶² See the Appendix for the full translation of this section.

¹⁶³ For an in-depth discussion of this, see: Steven E. Arsheim, *The Nietzsche Legacy in Germany 1890-1990* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992).

¹⁶⁴ See Barbara Besslich's discussion of Thomas Mann's "Gedanken im Kreig" in *Wege in den 'Kulturkrieg': Zivilisationskritik in Deutschland 1890-1914* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2000), 176-190.

expressed by the latter in his letters home during his own service. In 1915 Marc writes that “through this bloody discharge of weapons, Europe will rid itself of its poisonous elements, its flaws”¹⁶⁵ and later that same year, that “we artists are now intently preparing for the coming times, that will bring forth new concepts and laws.”¹⁶⁶ Burger's own letters explicitly reference Nietzsche's influence on the *Einführung*. He writes,

What has concerned Nietzsche, well you shall find the answer to that in my “Introduction.” I consider him the greatest prophet of our time. The present has proved him right... therefore he is my man. I love the power of his mysticism and the cosmic element in the content and motifs of his thought.”¹⁶⁷

Fritz Burger, like Franz Marc, for whom he had the utmost admiration, saw in Nietzsche's writing a mandate for a spiritual revolution, for the transformative power of war and a Dionysiac turn from Enlightenment thought. As Steven Arsheim has chronicled, such sentiment was no Dionysian preserve of agitated avant-garde intellectuals, but ties Burger's own writing to a thought and style then altogether in the popular currency. According to Arsheim, by 1914 this anti-rational, spiritual Nietzschean sentiment had become fundamentally implicated in the overall fabric of German and European culture.¹⁶⁸ As the poet and writer Ernst Blass (1890–1939) recalls in his essay “the Old Café des Westens:”

Yes, it was a spirited battle against the soullessness, the deadness, the laziness and meanness of the philistine world... the soul was still worth something... Even the timid and the silent learned how to talk and express themselves, learned to recognize what it

¹⁶⁵ Franz Marc, *Briefe aus dem Feld*, Karl Lanheit, ed. (New York: P. Lang), 53: “Europa durch diesen blutigen Austrag der Waffen ... die giftigen und brüchigen Elemente ... ausstoße.”

¹⁶⁶ “Wir modernen Maler sind kräftig mit am Werk, für das kommende Zeitalter, das alle begriffe und Gesetze neu aus sich gebären wird, auch eine neugeborene Kunst zu schaffen....” Franz Marc, “Letter to his wife Maria, March 28, 1915,” in *Briefe aus dem Feld*.

¹⁶⁷ Burger, “Letter to Clara Burger, May 1915,” in the Estate of Fritz Burger (Heidelberg). Quoted in Hauck, 109.

¹⁶⁸ Steven Arsheim, “Zarathustra in the Trenches: The Nietzsche Myth and World War I,” in H. Ben Isreal, et al, ed. *Religion, Ideology and Nationalism in Europe and America*. (Historical Society of Israel and the Zalman Shazar Center for Jewish History, 1986): 141-172, 142.

was they really felt deeply about it.... What was in the air? Above all van Gogh, Nietzsche, Freud too, and Wedekind. What was wanted was a post-rational Dionysos.¹⁶⁹

Fritz Burger's own engagement with this popular manifestation of Nietzschean thought is conspicuous if not overwhelming in the *Einführung* text. As formal analysis goes absent from his narrative, works of art within the text become mere illustrations of a kind of paraphrasing of a number of recognizable Nietzschean quotations. On the first page, after quoting from *Zarathustra*, "Oh my brother, what I can love in mankind, that is, that he is both transition [*Übergang*] and downfall [*Untergang*]." Kandinsky's *Komposition VI* (1913) is reproduced to echo the cataclysm of the *Untergang*, while Franz Marc's *Wasserfall im Eis*, is illustrated as the embodiment of the triumphant, crystalline *Übergang* to a new era (fig. 1.7).¹⁷⁰

As Christopher Wood argues in his introduction to the *Vienna School Reader*, this Nietzschean, "Expressionist" style of art history was all too easily blended with a nationalist hostility and a determinist view of the war as cultural expression.¹⁷¹ As found in the *Einführung*, Burger constructs an image of national mentalities as fundamental structural elements in the formation of new artistic styles, the very *Strukturformen* of modern art. The intuitive and unsystematic analogies that he had put to use in *Cézanne und Hodler* to produce readings of artistic *Weltanschauung* and of the artist's approach to nature, are set to work in the *Einführung* to produce a narrow narrative regarding the rebirth of the German spirit, the role of modernist art, and the cultural "renewal"

¹⁶⁹ Ernst Blass, "The old Café des Westens," in *The Era of German Expressionism*, ed. Paul Raabe, trans. J.M. Richie (London: Calder & Boyars), 29. Quoted in Steven E. Arsheim, *The Nietzsche Legacy in Germany 1890-1990*, 54.

¹⁷⁰ See Burger, *Einführung in die Moderne Kunst*, 9-10.

¹⁷¹ Wood, 30.

precipitated by the World War One, by this time already in full swing. This is particularly evident when he writes: "With bloody hands, the World War unveiled the true image of Europe and revealed the cosmopolitanism of scholarship, like the internationalism of socialism, in bankruptcy. We must recognize that our conceptions of logic, morals, love, ideals and the state are so firmly routed in a system of national thought that an unmediated understanding across national borders appears barely possible. The veil has fallen from our eyes....¹⁷²

No doubt the popularity of the *Einführung* in Germany in the teens and twenties had as much to do with its support of a German *völkerisch* aesthetic, as it had to do with its status as a popular introduction to modern art. Here the meaning of modern art need not be sought in complicated aesthetic thought or stylistic analysis, but rather in its connection to an existing and familiar cultural tradition (interrupted by French influence) and in the most immediate and pressing manifestations of military conflict. The subsequent gap in the art historical literature regarding Burger's work can also be interpreted as a result of the unviable nature of such interpretation in the post-war period. Although other art historians after Burger, such as Hans Sedlmayr and Wilhelm Pinder, expounded cultural analyses of equivalent nationalist vitriol, neither the former nor the

¹⁷²Burger, *Einführung in die Moderne Kunst*, 37: "Der Weltkrieg entschleierte mit blutigen Händen das Bild des wirklichen Europas und erklärte den Kosmopolitismus der Wissenschaft wie den Internationalismus des Sozialismus in Bankrott. Wir müssen erkennen, daß unsere Begriffe von Logik, Moral, Liebe, Ideal, Staat in einem System nationalen Denkens so fest verankert sind, daß ein unmittelbares Verstehen über diese nationalen Grenzen hinaus kaum möglich erscheint.... Ein Schleier fällt vor unserem Angesicht. Wert und Wesen ihrer Erzeugnisse im staatlichen und kulturellen Leben verglichen mit denen aller Völker der Erde, die heute auf blutigem Felde hassend einander sich gegenüberstehen, weitet sich der Blick, die Seele und in der allgemeinen Anarchie findet die Kunst allein das Wort für die Sehnsucht der Gegenwart und das geistige Bild der Zukunft mit einer starken, fast prophetischen Gewalt."

latter wrote in support of contemporary art.¹⁷³ In this sense, Burger's writing could not be useful to the dissemination and de-mystification of European modern art for an English-speaking audience after the Second World War (in which the de-politicization of European avant-gardes was tantamount to its acceptance), nor could it lend support to National Socialist cultural policies that presented modern art as a degenerate and un-German cultural development. The brief popularity of the *Einführung* speaks to a particular moment in which the German, art-conscious public could accept avant-garde tendencies—particularly the Expressionist works of Kandinsky and Marc—as a project of national and nationalist importance.

To interpret the success of Burger's *Einführung in die Moderne Kunst* as a publication can only be speculative, although a few comments could be made here on its surprisingly wide dissemination between 1917 and 1931. Although the original intention of this the author was to present Burger's work through comparison rather than description, the necessity of the latter became apparent. Unlike his contemporaries Wölfflin and Worringer, Burger is quick to name the sources of his theoretical models. His writings are imbricated with the words and names of philosophers, historians and writers: Hegel, Kant, Spinoza, Schopenhauer, Leibniz, Tolstoy, Fiedler, Hildebrand, Burckhardt, Wölfflin and Nietzsche would form only an abridged list. These admissions do elucidate his work's intellectual touchstones and at the same time they onerously complicate the task of unraveling Burger's own work. One might speculate that a source

¹⁷³ See Christopher Wood's introduction in *The Vienna School Reader* for a full treatment of Sedlmayr's anti-modern art writings as well as his work's own reception. Christopher Wood, *The Vienna School Reader*, 1-47.

of the popular appeal of Burger's writings were that they provided what appeared to be a more portable, illustrated and penetrable “digestion” of these academicians. Although the original works of Kant, Hegel or Schopenhauer may not have been popular reading, Burger's broad use of their thought (however simplified) gives one the sense that their status as fundamental contributors to German aesthetics and intellectual tradition was not lost on a popular audience.

Chapter Two: Pedagogy and the Avant-Garde, 1909–1914

While in Munich, Burger was in close contact with the contemporary art scene through his personal relationships with artists, gallery owners and museum directors. Pedagogically, Burger made use of the city's art scene to the benefit of his students and, in turn, developed his theoretical work in response to his interest in artistic practice. Indeed, Burger's theories of artistic *Gesichtsvorstellung* or *künstlerische Erkenntnis* are inseparable from his pedagogical originality and his involvement with contemporary art. For Burger, an interest in the art of his time was not in conflict with art historical praxis. Rather, such a pursuit was essential to the study of other periods in art history. This is evident in his continued pursuit of historical subjects and his projected project, *das Handbuch der Kunstwissenschaft*. As Burger explains in the beginning of his book, *German Painting of the Renaissance* (1910) and reiterated at a speech made for the opening of the Schack Gallery in Munich (1912), he intended that his work should “serve the interests of the present, *der Gegenwart*, with the knowledge of the irresolvable subjectivity and relativity of all historical research.”¹⁷⁴ To embrace one's contemporaneity through the observation of contemporary art was not the abandonment of a rigorous art historical practice, but, no matter how troublesome, the re-grounding of its epistemological foundation.

¹⁷⁴ Kraubig, 2: “aus Einsicht in die unaufhebbare Subjektivität und Relativität alles historischen Forschens – ganz den Belangen der Gegenwart dienen.” Original source: Burger, *Der Deutsche Malerei der Renaissance* (Berlin-Neubabelsberg: Neue Gesellschaft Athenaion, 1910), VII.

Detailing Burger's career at the University of Munich and relationship to a Munich-based avant-garde to establish Burger's relationship to a particular intellectual and artistic milieu, allows the speculation that Burger enjoyed first-hand knowledge of the works he discussed and provides important insight into his theoretical interest in artistic *Erkenntnis* as it binds his art historical method and pedagogy. Furthermore, Burger's connection to the artists Franz Marc and Wassily Kandinsky improves our knowledge of these artists' own contribution to and contact with then-contemporary art historical discourse.

Praktikum at the University of Munich

As reported by his daughter, Lile Fehle-Burger, Burger's first contact with working artists occurred during a trip to Italy between 1898 and 1899.¹⁷⁵ This included his acquaintance with Adolf von Hildebrand, an artist whose book *Das Problem der Form in der bildenden Kunst* (1892) would continue to be reflected in Burger's work. By 1906, Burger had completed his PhD candidacy at the University of Heidelberg and was working as an adjunct professor at the University of Munich.¹⁷⁶ Burger remained in correspondence with Hildebrand after this time regarding his teaching at the University and in 1911, Burger asked the artist to support his plan for an art historical *Praktikum* at

¹⁷⁵ Hauck, 187: "Burger's Tochter Lili Fehrle Burger erwähnt in einem selbstverfassten Lebenslauf über Fritz Burger, der vielfach auch in Veröffentlichungen anderer Autoren inhaltlich fortwirkt, Begegnung Burgers während seiner ersten Italienreise 1898-1899 "mit dem Münchner Bildhauer Adolf von Hildebrand und seines Freundeskreises." Allerdings fehlen dazu alle weiteren Hinweise." [Burger's daughter, Lili Fehrle Burger, mentions in a self-produced biography of Fritz Burger—one that is often cited in publications by other authors that, "Burger made contact with the Münchner sculptor Adolf von Hildebrand and his circle of friends during his first trip to Italy;" however further citation is missing.]

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., 53.

the University by speaking to students as part of the lecture.¹⁷⁷ As indicated by records in the university archive and noted by the author Karl Heinz Herke in 1924, Burger would regularly ask Munich-based artists to come to the studio as part of his course entitled, Practical Course in Art Scholarship (Practical Introduction to Compositional Problems in Painting) [*Kunstwissenschaftliches Praktikum (Praktische Einführung in die Gestaltungsprobleme der Malerei)*].¹⁷⁸ Besides Hildebrand, these artists included Marc who came to the *Praktikum* as a guest in 1914, at least according to Matthias Müller-Lentrod. ¹⁷⁹ In this course, conceived in 1907 and offered between 1910 and 1914, Burger lectured on works from the Renaissance to the present, spoke with invited guests and provided students the opportunity to compare and observe works first-hand.¹⁸⁰ Most importantly however, the *Praktikum* served as a studio course for art history students in which they were required to experiment with the techniques extant in the objects of study. Students produced sketches, painted studies and sculptural models to aid in the hands-on observation of technique and form-making.¹⁸¹ Examples of class activities included the simple reproduction of typical motifs in the style of Titian, Rubens, Renoir,

¹⁷⁷ See Bernhard Sattler, ed. *Adolf von Hildebrand und seine Welt – Briefe und Erinnerungen* (Munich: Callwey, 1962), 592-593. See also Hauck, 592: "Letter from Fritz Burger, April 22, 1911." Burger writes, "...es kommt mir eben in wesentlichen darauf an, als Ergänzung zum theoretischen Kolleg der Einzelnen unabhängig von seiner künstlerischen Begabung zum selbständigen Durchdenken der künstlerischen Probleme...."

¹⁷⁸ Art historical (or scholarly) training (practical introduction to the problems of form in painting).

¹⁷⁹ Müller-Lentrod, 69. "Burger war... eng befreundet mit Franz Marc, den er zum Praktikum in seinen Unterricht Einlud." [Burger was a close friend of Franz Marc's, whom he invited to his praktikum in his class.]

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., 68. "Der Zweck des damals bei Kollegen nicht unumstrittenen Praktikums bestand nicht nur in der Ausbildung künstlerisch-technischer Fertigkeiten, sondern auch in der Befähigung zu formanalytischen Untersuchungen auf der Grundlage von vergleichenden Beobachtungen vor dem Kunstobjekt..."

¹⁸¹ Ibid. See also: Robert Hedicke, *Methodenlehre der Kunstgeschichte*, 132: "Burger hat mit seinen Schülern Originale vieler Zeiten und vieler Schulen kopiert, um an diesen Kopien Farben zu studieren. Das ist gewiß eine höchste fruchtbare Methode, von der reiche kunsthistorische technische Farbenerkenntnis zu erwarten ist. Nur muß sich der farbenstudierende Kunsthistoriker durchaus hüten, dabei Künstler zu werden und darf nicht etwa Expressionist werden..." Translation extant in footnote 8.

Cézanne or Van Gogh, the copying of important works in respect to their essential compositional arrangement, and the production of painting-studies based on characteristic brushstrokes found in masterworks, modern and classic.¹⁸² Whereas Burger's colleague at the University of Munich, Wölfflin, conceived of his art historical methodology as a history of vision, Burger projected an art historical methodology based on what could be called a history of form making, based in visual reading and tactile connection. Thus in his *praktikum*, Burger encouraged students to try to develop the kind of tacit, physical knowledge of form that he attempted to analyze in his writings.

As Burger writes in the introduction to his *Die Schack Galerie* in 1912, "...Art is neither a matter of belief nor a question of taste, rather it is a question of *Erkenntnis*...reflection on the relationships between the individual, sensible components presented [in the work]."¹⁸³ Just as one might consider a text or speech as thought given sensible form requiring the knowledge of language, to understand artistic form one must engage with form-making. Burger made exactly this argument in 1913 in *Cézanne und Hodler*, when he quotes Konrad Fiedler, "In the same way that thought develops in language, so will seeing as seeing develop through visual presentation."¹⁸⁴ As previously discussed, in the comparison that Burger makes between art and language, artistic form appears to Burger as an incarnation of "*Anschauliche Denken*" [thought made

¹⁸² Hauck, 62: "In Stilübungen wurde ... die Aufgabe gestellt, bestimmte Bildmotive in der Manier eines Tizians, Rubens, Renoir, Cézanne oder van Gogh in den wesentlichsten Konturen und charakteristischen Pinselstrichen wiederzugeben."

¹⁸³ *Die Schack Galerie*, 12: "...Kunst ist weder Glaubenssache noch eine Geschmacksfrage, sondern eine Frage der Erkenntnis ... ein Denken über die Beziehungen von vorgestellten, sinnlichen Einzelheiten..."

¹⁸⁴ *Cézanne und Hodler*, 12: "Wie sich das Denken mit der Sprache entwickelt, so das Sehen als Sehen mit der bildlichen Darstellung."

sensible].¹⁸⁵ Thus to limit interpretation of a work to the conditions of its creation, the artist's biography or the relevance of his national origin was to ignore the work's very mode of communication. The unique form of the work required theoretical and discursive delineation between *begrifflicher Erkenntnis* [conceptual cognition] as present in language and the *anschaulicher Erkenntnis* [visible cognition] manifest in the visual arts.¹⁸⁶

Burger's theoretical thrust, as outlined in the first chapter and found most apparently in *Cézanne und Hodler*, was thus extended into his pedagogical practice. A student's ability to manipulate the materials observed in an artwork—by imitating the brushwork of van Gogh or the line of Michelangelo—would help reveal the work's "thought-content." Taking various turns of phrase in Burger's writing, what he refers to as *anschaulicher Erkenntnis* or *künstlerische Erkenntnis* remains otherwise inseparable from the work's physical form and could not be abstracted into mere conceptual terms. For an art historian to understand and manipulate the artwork to create an appearance of unity, the *Gesichtsvorstellung* allowed the work of art to be approached through an understanding of the physical creation process, its *own* as enacted by the artist, rather than through the application of a pre-existing rubric of form. As discussed with regard to *Cézanne und Hodler*, extant art-historical categories based merely on the observation of

¹⁸⁵ See Liane Burckhardt's summation of many (unreferenced quotations from Burger) in, "...bei aller Wissenschaftlichkeit, lebendig...", 173: "...konstatierte Burger ferner eine "notwendige Verschiebung der bislang dominanten begrifflich-logischen Erkenntnis zugunsten der anschaulichen Erkenntnis." Um allerdings in Bildern zu denken, "in Abwesenheit der gegenständlich-empirischen Wirklichkeit," wie es in einem zwischen 1910-1912 zu datierenden Manuskript heißt, bedarf es neben der "Ausbildung des Sehvermögens und des Wissens um die Gestaltungselemente" unbedingt der "Fähigkeit die Gesichtsvorstellungen variable miteinander verbinden zu können."

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

works, for example Wölfflin's description of the “painterly” and the “linear” or “unity” and “multiplicity,” were inadequate insofar as they would perpetuate their own application for the sake of categorization without recourse to the unique creative process of the individual artist.¹⁸⁷

Based on records at the University of Munich, it appears the studio *Praktikum* raised concerns that Burger had crossed an un-interrogated boundary between art practice and art history. With regard to the distinction between art academy training and his own aesthetic-philosophical ends, Burger defended his *Praktikum* to the University of Munich in 1911: “These exercises are not done in order [for the students] to reach an artistic proficiency in the sense of a creative artist ... rather the objective is to understand the objective cognition of artistic composition entirely in its essence and development in connection to art history.”¹⁸⁸ In 1913, despite his protests within the department, the space Burger had been using at the Institute for Psychology was no longer free and his own faculty was unwilling to provide alternative or additional room.

¹⁸⁷Burger, *Cézanne und Hodler*, 40: “Man darf aber nicht glauben, daß das, was (der Künstler) will, etwa ähnliche auch bei Meistern zu finden sei, die wie er von der “Linie” ausgehen, ein gutes Beispiel dafür, daß mit den üblichen Schlagworten “linear” oder “zeichnerisch” und “malerisch” gar nichts gesagt ist.”

¹⁸⁸ “Die Übungen bezwecken nicht die Erreichung künstlerischer Fertigkeiten im Sinne des schaffenden Künstlers ... sondern die objektive Erkenntnis der Künstlerischen Gestaltung überhaupt nach seinem Wesen und seiner Entwicklung im Zusammenhang mit der Kunstgeschichte.”

-- “Report from Dr. Fritz Burger to the Faculty of Philosophy, February 12, 1911.” Fakultätsakten der Philosophischen Fakultät der Universität München, E-II-1039. Quoted in Hauck, 61.

Studio and Gallery Tours in Burger's Seminar

The studio-based *Praktikum* was not the only activity Burger pursued to foster contact between contemporary art practice and art history. In the fall of 1911 he began offering a course entitled “Exercises for the Consideration of Modern Painting and Sculpture in Art Exhibitions” [*Übungen im Betrachten moderner Gemälde und Skulpturen (Kunstaussstellung)*] one that was based on a series of guided tours through art galleries and artist studios in the city.¹⁸⁹ In 1913, Burger's guided tour course had an enrollment of 217. Commenting on his success with the students, Burger wrote to his wife in 1911, “the students prefer to follow me into unfamiliar territory.”¹⁹⁰ The “unfamiliar territory” to the students at the University of Munich was a relatively new art scene functioning under the aegis of an influential and broad-minded circle of collectors, art dealers and museum directors. Evidently much taken with the vitality of artistic life in Munich, Burger writes in 1912:

Besides the fact that I have found an array of activity here, that to me would be possible at no other University in Germany, one stands in a sense in closest contact with a superb scene whose reach extends over the entire world in a way that would elsewhere only be possible in Paris or London.... Indeed this circle is not comprised only of Münchners, rather the major contingent is comprised of newcomers, and these, too, of an intellectual and artistic elite, one that could be found nowhere else in Germany. [My wife)]Clara,

¹⁸⁹ See Karl Heinz Herke, *Vom Expressionismus zur Schönheit: über Entwicklung und Wesen der modernen Kunst* (Mainz: Grünewald, 1923), 59. “Burger hat immer lebendige Beziehungen mit den Künstlern Münchners unterhalten...er liess ansässige Künstler um neuere Arbeiten bitten, die er dann in besonderen Vorlesungen unter großen Zulauf besprach.” [Burger maintained vital relationships with the artists of Munich, he requested new work from local artists that he then explained in special lectures with great popularity.] See the following footnote as well.

¹⁹⁰ Quoted in Hauck, 57: “In seinen ‘Übungen zum Betrachten moderner Gemälde und Skulpturen in Kunstaussstellungen’ führte er seine Studenten auch in Münchner Künstlerateliers. In einem Brief an seine Frau bemerkt er: ‘...mit Vorliebe folgen mir die Studenten auf ihnen unbekanntem Terrain...’” Original source quoted from, Fritz Burger, “Letter to Clara Burger” December 11 1911, Estate of Fritz Burger (Heidelberg, n.d.).

Mrs. Hildebrand [wife of Adolf von Hildebrand] and Mrs. Furtwängler [wife of the archeologist Adolf Furtwängler] rave about it.¹⁹¹

Galleries that participated in Burger's "teaching tours" included Hans Goltz's New Art Gallery [*Galerie neue Kunst – Hans Goltz*], Brackl's Modern Gallery, the Caspari Gallery and the Thannhauser gallery.¹⁹² In particular, the Goltz and Thannhauser galleries were influential in introducing contemporary modern art movements such as Cubism, Fauvism, and Expressionism, to the relatively conservative German city. Hans Goltz opened his gallery for modern art in October 1911 in conjunction with a small publishing house and bookstore. Included among its first shows was "Charivari und Simplicisismus," an exhibition on contemporary German political satire from the magazine *Simplicisismus* and drawings from Daumier. The second exhibition of the *Blaue Reiter* group was also hosted by Goltz, and in the same year Goltz established an exclusive contract with the artist Egon Schiele. In 1912, Paul Klee had reason to remark that, "with the opening of the Goltzchen private gallery for new art...Munich has produced a fetching little surprise. New art has received a proper home...."¹⁹³ Between

¹⁹¹ Burger, "Letter to Marie von Duhn" (January 24, 1907), From the Estate of Fritz Burger, (Heidelberg): "...abgesehen davon, daß ich hier ein Feld der Wirksamkeit gefunden habe, wie mir das an keiner anderen Universität Deutschlands möglich wäre, steht man doch auch in einer Weise in dem innigsten Kontakt zu einem großartigen Kunsthandel, deren Fäden sich über die ganze Welt ausdehnen so wie dies nur in Paris oder London möglich sein könnte... Allerdings stellen zu diesen Kreisen nicht die Münchner, sondern die zugereisten Elemente das größere Kontingent dar, aber eben diese sind es, die eine geistige und künstlerische Elite darstellen, wie sie nicht wieder in Deutschland zu finden ist. Davon schwärmten Clärle nicht nur Frau Furtwängler und Frau Hildebrand." Quoted in Hauck, 188.

¹⁹² For a detailed discussion of the Hans Goltz gallery, see Katrin Lochmaier, "Die Galerie, 'Neue Kunst – Hans Goltz' in München" in *Avant-Garde und Publikum: Zur Rezeption avantgardistischer Kunst in Deutschland 1905-1933*, Henrike Junge, ed. (Cologne: Böhlau, 1992), 103-11. See also Burkhardt, "Schließlich nahm sich ähnlich unorthodox wie seine Themenwahl auch seine Verfahrensweise aus, in dem ihm u. a. Brackls Moderne Galerie wie die Galerien Caspari oder Tannhauser (sic) als feste Adressen für seine Kollegien zur jüngeren Kunst galten." [Burger had an unusual choice of subjects for his teaching methods, these included the Caspari gallery, Thannhauser gallery and Brackls modern art gallery among others that remained fixed addresses for his seminars on new art.]

¹⁹³ Paul Klee in *Die Alpen* 8 (October, 1912/1913), 123. Reprinted in Christian Geelhaar, ed. *Rezensionen*

1914 and 1915 Goltz staged twenty-three show, displaying and selling works by Cézanne, van Gogh, Matisse, Picasso, Braque and the Brücke group.¹⁹⁴

The Thannhauser gallery, established in Munich in 1904, began exhibiting works by the French Impressionists including Edouard Manet, Edgar Degas and Paul Gauguin in the same year. Thannhauser was also among the first to exhibit the work of Picasso and Braque in Germany. In 1909 the gallery hosted the first exhibition by the *Neue Künstlerlervereinigung* (NKV) that would have included works by Alexej Jawlensky, Adolf Erbslöh, Gabriele Münter and Kandinsky.¹⁹⁵ The second major installation of works by the NKV also occurred at Thannhauser between September 1st and 14th in 1910 and included works from thirty-one artists. Along with the Munich-based artists were works by major figures of French contemporary art including Georges Braque, Henri Le Fauconnier, Pablo Picasso, and Claude Derain.¹⁹⁶ Thannhauser and the NKVM (Erbslöh in particular) also took great interest in the work of Henri Rousseau—fifteen of Rousseau's works were shown in Munich in 1910. Beginning on December 18, 1911, the *Blaue Reiter* exhibition also took place at the Thannhauser, concurrent with the beginning of Burger's course offering. In the winter semester of 1910–1911, Burger offered his guided art exhibition course at the University of Munich. The class included tours through the Thannhauser gallery and the Hans Goltz gallery and would have familiarized

und Aufsätze, (Cologne: Dumont, 1976), 112. "München brachte eine reizende kleine Überraschung durch die Eröffnung der Glozschen Privatgalerie für neue Kunst, in denkbar bester Lage am odeonsplatz. Diese neue Kunst hat nun ein richtiges Heim bekommen..."

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., 105.

¹⁹⁵ For a full treatment of the Thannhauser Galerie, see Mario Andreas von Lüttichau, "Die Moderne Galerie Heinrich Thannhauser in München," in Henrike Junge, ed. *Avantgarde und Publikum: Zum Rezeption avantgardischer Kunst in Deutschland 1905-1933* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1992), 119-133. See also Emily D. Bilski, ed., *Thannhauser: Händler, Sammler, Stifter*, (Nürnberg: Verlag für Moderne Kunst, 2006), 11.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

students with the artists and works in these shows. One student, Walter Dexel, went on to become a gallerist and director of the *Jena Kunstverein* and a promoter of the Expressionists, Bauhaus, Dada and Constructivism in the 1920s. When serving as an editor on a later edition of *Cézanne und Hodler*, Dexel mentions his indebtedness to Burger's courses in Munich for his early impressions of modern art.¹⁹⁷

For Burger, arranging these practical training courses for history students at the university was an attempt to bridge the gap between the theoretical and formal concerns of historians and the concerns inherent to artistic practice, an attempt that extended to many of his class offerings even those not engaged with studio work or field trips. In the summer semester of 1913, the Munich art dealers Paul Ferdinand Schmidt (later the director of the state gallery of Dresden) and Max Dietzel came to Burger's course, "History of Painting from 1800 to the Present" to discuss 19th century painting and, one would assume, their experience as dealers.¹⁹⁸ In another course, Burger taught the history of German 19th century painting based on tours through the Munich Schack Gallery and the Neue Pinakothek, one course that became the basis of Burger's publication in 1912, the *Die Schack Galerie*. Likewise, Burger's course, "Tour through the Alte Pinakothek"

¹⁹⁷ One student, Walter Dexel, went on to become the gallery director of the Jena Kunstverein organizing shows from the Expressionists, Bauhaus artists, Dada and Russian Constructivists during the teens and twenties, exhibiting artists such as Archipenko, Giacometti, Paul Klee, Oskar Kokoschka, Emil Nolde, among others. See: Volker Wahl, "Walter Dexel und der Jenaer Kunstverein" in Henricke Junge, ed: 39-51. "... (Dexel) wechselte aber 1910 an die Universität München über. Hier began er mit dem Studium der Kunstgeschichte, als deren akademische Lehrer Heinrich Wölfflin und Fritz Burger für Dexel wichtig wurden. Besonders Burger mit seinen Vorlesungen über moderne Kunst und seinem 1914 erschienenen Buch "Cézanne und Hodler: Einführung in die Probleme der Malerei der Gegenwart," das er nach Burgers Kriegestod in zweiter, von ihm überarbeiteter Auflage 1917 herausgab, verdankte Dexel wesentlich Frühprägungen."

¹⁹⁸ Burckhardt, *Kunstwissenschaft zwischen Fach-Berufprofilierung*, 100.

would have brought students to Munich's collection of painting from the 14th to the 18th century for first-hand observation.

Although unusual considering professional distance found in this period between the spheres of artistic practice and history, such work was not entirely without precedents at the University of Munich.¹⁹⁹ The art historian Richard Muther, who earned his PhD at the University of Munich in 1893, recommended that his students visit the studios at the visual arts academy and used his own contacts to tour artist ateliers explaining artistic technique *in situ*.²⁰⁰ Burger took this idea further. Mere observation could not supplant hands-on application of artistic technique by art history students as a way to get closer to the work. This irreconcilability of art historical scholarship and the work of the artist was lamented by Wölfflin in a letter dated 1893 when he writes of “an unsatisfying feeling, when one is dealing with things that cannot be inwardly understood, that we cannot see beneath their skin.”²⁰¹ For Burger, discursive reliance upon biography and cultural milieu could not bring the scholar closer to the work. Rather, active experimentation with

¹⁹⁹ See Karl Bernhard Stack, “Über Kunst und Kunswissenschaft auf deutschen Universitäten,” in G. Kinkel, ed. *Vorträge und Aufsätze aus dem Gebiete der Archäologie und Kunstgeschichte* (Leipzig: 1880), 1-20: “...der ausübende Künstler und Gelehrte befinden sich tatsächlich in Deutschland selten in nahem Lebensverkehr, empfangen unmittelbar wenig Anregung von einander...” [Indeed the practicing artist and the scholar are seldom find themselves in similar circumstances and certainly accept little stimulation from each other.] Quoted in: Liane Burckhardt, *Kunswissenschaft zwischen Fach – Berufsprofilierung*, 67.

²⁰⁰ See Sybille Dürr, *Zur Geschichte des Faches Kunstgeschichte an der Universität München* (Munich: Tuduv, 1993), “Ein erster Vertreter dieser Auffassung war in München Richard Muther, der sich 1883 habilitiert hatte. Er empfahl seinen Studenten zusätzlich den Besuch der Akademie-Werkstätten und seine zahlreichen Künstlerkontakte nutzte Muther, um Atelierbesuche und damit künstlerisch-technische Gegebenheiten anschaulich zu vermitteln.” “An early advocate at the University of Munich was Richard Muther, who finished his dissertation there in 1883. He recommended his students supplement their education with visits to the workshops of the art academy and put his many artistic contact to work in visits to ateliers in order to communicate artistic-technical conditions.”

²⁰¹ For Heinrich Wölfflin's comment on “being under the skin of art” see Joseph Gantner, ed. *Heinrich Wölfflin (1864-1945) Autobiographie Tagebücher und Briefe*, (Basel: Schwabe, 1982), 135. “...Unbefriedigendes Gefühl, wenn man immer mit Dingen zu tun hat, die man nicht innerlich versteht, denen man nicht unter die Haut sieht.” [It is an unsatisfying feeling, when one is always dealing with things that cannot be inwardly understood, that we cannot see underneath their skin.]

artistic technique and materials was the only method in which an observer could understand the *Erkenntnis*—the cognition and insight—of the artists themselves, the kernel beneath the skin of the work. The aim, as discussed in part one, was not to find the relationship between the world and the artwork as a mimetic relationship, but to recover the unique world-view of the artist-philosopher expressed in the work of art through which the world might be seen anew. Thus the aim of these courses and of Burger's hands-on technique was to train art historians in the kind of creative, intuitive interpretation that he practiced in both *Cézanne und Hodler* and *Einführung in die Moderne Kunst*. To work, as Burger attempted to, analogically between the forming (*gestalten*) of an object and the world-view and relationship to nature it presented, required physical knowledge of the object. As will be discussed in my conclusion, the latter half of this methodological formula, interpretation as a creative structural allegory between the work and a philosophical disposition of the artist and, further, out into the mind [*Geist*] of an age, is not far removed from either the expressionist work of Dvorak or the more sober but equally intuitive methods of *Struktur* developed in the new Vienna School in the later twenties and thirties.²⁰²

Beyond his personal involvement with and interest in the *Blaue Reiter* group and the Munich-based gallery scene, Burger's insistence upon the art historian's engagement with modern art is a preoccupation that set him distinctly apart from his contemporaries in academia. The art historian Martin Warnke has hypothesized that Wölfflin may have had some interest in the Munich scene—based on the surviving evidence of letter

²⁰² Wood, 1-51.

indicating his possible attendance at Franz Marc exhibition—despite the absence of other surviving documentation.²⁰³ Likewise, the assumption that Burger's other well-known contemporary, Worringer, was in personal association and familiarity with recent developments in actual abstract art during the writing of his dissertation, *Abstraktion und Einfühlung*, is argued by the author Frank Büttner to be a regrettable misconception.²⁰⁴

Indeed Büttner wonders at the source of its appeal to contemporary artists given the overt

²⁰³ See Marin Warnke, "On Heinrich Wölfflin" *Representations* 27 (Summer, 1989): 179. He writes, "This confirmation of Wölfflin's contact with the Blaue Reiter group, to my knowledge confirmed nowhere else, suggests the value of examining the text for specific evidence of the oft-noted proximity of the Principles of Art History to the movement towards abstraction in the Blaue Reiter."

²⁰⁴ As argued by Frank Büttner, Worringer did not have contact with Kandinsky or the Blaue Reiter group prior to his publishing of *Einführung und Abstraktion* in 1908 and was likely referring to the qualities of late 19th century representational German art, for example, the work of Adolf von Hildebrand. See: "Das Paradigma, 'Einfühlung,' bei Robert Vischer, Heinrich Wölfflin und Wilhelm Worringer: Die problematische Karriere einer kunsttheoretischen Fragestellung," in *200 Jahre Kunstgeschichte in München: Positionen, Perspektiven, Polemik 1780-1980*, Christian Drude, ed. (Munich: Deutschen Kunstverlag, 2003): 83-93. More, Büttner wonders at the the appeal of Worringer's work to contemporary artists and deserves to be quoted at some length: "Im Rückblick aus dem Abstand von fast hundert Jahren muß man sagen, daß Worringers arbeit nicht zuletzt deswegen eine so große Wirkung erzielte, weil sie eine ganze Reihe ovn aktuellen Vorurteilen bediente, wie eben ein rassenideologisches Denken, die Vorstellung von der Dekadenz der Kultur seit der Renaissance, oder den Antiintellektualismus...Hieraus kann man auch die bedenkenswerte These ableiten, daß für die junge Moderne, die diesen Text rezipierte, das Deutungsschema der Einfühlung nicht weniger wichtig war als die von Worringer vorgestellte ideologisierte Abstraktion...Aus der Perspektive der Kunstgeschichtswissenschaft betrachtet, waren und sind Worringers Theorien ohne jedes historisches Fundament...In der Kunsthistorischen Methodendiskussion hat Worringers Werk keine Rolle gespielt. " [Looking back with nearly a hundred years removed it must be said that Worringer's work had such a tremendous effect due in no small part to the fact that it offered the full range of then-contemporary prejudices, including anti-intellectualism, racist ideology and the conception of cultural decadence since the Renaissance. From this one can deduce that for the young moderns who received his text, the conceptual-schema of "Empathy" was no less important than Worringer's ideologized, imagined concept of "Abstraction"... (but) observed from the perspective of art historical scholarship, Worringer's theories were and are devoid of all historical foundation... In the discussion of art historical methods, Worringer's work played no roll.] See also: Rolf Hauck, Fritz Burger 1877-1916, 101: "Worringer hatte ursprünglich seine wissenschaftlichen Arbeiten nicht im Hinblick auf eine neu zu schaffende Kunst, etwa den Expressionismus verfasst; in publizierten Schriften vertrat er eher ein konkretes Kunstideal, dem z.B. Hans von Marées entsprach. Allerdings wird in den folgenden Jahren der Einfluss Worringers auf die Theoretiker des Expressionismus in den veröffentlichten Artikeln Marcs, Mackes und Kandinskys erstmals greifbar." [Originally, Worringer did not base his scholarly in view of newly emerging art like Expressionism; in published writings he was advocating concrete art ideal, for example, as found in the work of Hans von Marées. Of course in the following years Worringer's influence on the theoreticians of Expressionism is found in the published work of Marc, Macke and Kandinsky.] For Worringer's importance to the Expressionists, see Magdalena Bushart, *Der Geist der Gotik und die Expressionistische kunst: Kunstgeschichte und Kunsttheorie 1911-1925*: 24.

nationalism of its final chapters.²⁰⁵ With regard to the seeming singularity of Burger's pursuit, Benn Reifenberg writes that, "the university instructors had—with the exception of Fritz Burger who died in 1916 at Verdun—left the topic of modern art untreated."²⁰⁶ Unsurprisingly at least one author has attempted to align Burger's concentration upon the contemporary *work* of art history with the interests of writers and critics such as Carl Einstein, rather than other historians.²⁰⁷ Based on his chosen subject alone, Burger's interest in contemporary art may place him closer to a stream of contemporary criticism, but Burger's aim, unlike the critic's, was to produce an *historically* applicable method of interpretation.

Although other aggravating circumstances may have gone unrecorded, Burger's enthusiastic but unorthodox teaching methods do not seem to have won him much favor with his colleagues at the university. Such a position was evidently a risky one for an adjunct professor without a permanent position. In order to secure funding and classroom space for his hands-on *Praktikum* in the summer session of 1911, Burger was forced to add "for the purpose of stylistic research" to the title of his course, an addition that elides his otherwise evident ambivalence to stylistic categorization.²⁰⁸ Burger's antagonistic

²⁰⁵ Ibid. See quotation in preceding footnote.

²⁰⁶ Benno Reifenberg, "Julius Meier-Graefe," *Die neue Rundschau* 73 (1962): 746.

²⁰⁷ Müller-Lentrod, 77. Müller-Lentrod provides a video by Einstein and Burger that point to their similar interests.

²⁰⁸ One example of the conflict between Burger's aims and the University's opinions regarding the content of Art History classes occurs the summer semester of 1911 when he was forced to add the addendum "zum Zwecke stilkritischen Untersuchungen" (for the purpose of critical stylistic investigations) to the title of his "kunstwissenschaftliches Praktikum." Kräubig, 4: "Augrund von Differenzen mit den Fachkollegen sah sich Burger ab dem Wintersemester 1911/12 gezwungen, diese praktischen Einführungen mit dem Zusatz "zum Zwecke stilkritischer Untersuchungen" anzukündigen." [due to differences with his colleagues within the department, Burger was compelled to add "for the purpose of critical style investigations."] Original source is an unpublished letter from Burger to the Philosophy department at the University of Munich dated January 23, 1913.

relationship with Heinrich Wölfflin in particular, who became a department *Ordinarius* (full professor) with the death of Berthold Riehl in 1911, appears to have deteriorated towards the end of Burger's time in Munich. Letters from Burger to his wife evidence the young instructor's frustration at Wölfflin's lack of support and there is evidence that the latter attempted to relieve Burger of his teaching commitments.²⁰⁹ No doubt, Burger's open criticism of academia while pursuing a career in academia at the university may not have been an advantageous professional decision. Yet in 1914, Burger's contract was renewed despite Wölfflin's tepid evaluation of his work as quite essentially “*unwissenschaftlich*.”²¹⁰ A full dissection of the schism that may have occurred either personally or methodologically between Wölfflin and Burger is perhaps unnecessary. As mentioned in the first chapter of this thesis, Burger quite openly doubted the validity of Wölfflin's formal pairs in *Cézanne und Hodler* and dismissed them as yet another externally developed rubric that remained insensitive to the artistic process. Whatever can be said for the sustained validity of Wölfflin's categories, certainly the coining of “critical terms” was, and often remains, one aspect of a methodology's continued persistence within the discipline. Structured, consistent conceptual vocabulary is absent in Burger's writings, perhaps yet another reason why his work could be judged to be without rigor or theoretical coherence. In combination with a teaching strategy that had art history

²⁰⁹ Burger, "Letter to Clara Burger, Spring 1914" Estate of Fritz Burger. Quoted in Hauck, 68: "...Ich sah mir heute Tietzes Methodologie an: es steht wirklich drin...so sind doch die Arbeiten von Hegel und Riegl bis Worringer und Burger von großer Bedeutung für die Kunstgeschichte. Es ärgert mich, daß Wölfflin schreibt, Tietze erwähne mich nur anmerkungsweise, obwohl das im Text steht..." [Today I got a look at Tietze's Methodology... and so indeed I see that the work from Hegel and Riegl to Worringer and Burger of great importance for art history. It makes me angry that Wölfflin writes that Tietze mentions me only in a comment although that is in the text...].

²¹⁰ Ibid., 69.

students making their own attempts at painting and sculpture, Wölfflin's expression of doubt is not unjustified.

Relationship to Kandinsky and Marc

As recorded by several scholars in recent considerations of Burger's work, the art historian worked in close friendly connection to the artistic circle of the *Blaue Reiter* and was well acquainted with Kandinsky and a close friend of Marc.²¹¹ As evident in Burger's existing texts, both artists were of significant art historical interest to the writer:

Kandinsky's wood-cuts (as they were published in *Der Sturm*) are found throughout Burger's *Einführung in die Moderne Kunst*; as discussed in part one, the juxtaposition of these images with woodcuts from the early German Renaissance provided a visual and theoretical link between these "new" and "old" ages of spiritual awakening (fig. 1.7, 1.9). Burger also devotes several pages to the work of Marc, a half dozen illustrations and refers to him as "the most characteristic personality for the thought and creation of this young generation in Germany."²¹² Likewise, both artists are discussed at length in *Cézanne und Hodler* although Burger's appraisal of Kandinsky's work was not without its reservations regarding the artist's own theories of color and its associative, psychological and spiritual effects.

²¹¹ See Müller-Lentrott, 69: "Burger stand in enger freundschaftlicher Verbindung zur Künstler Vereinigung "Der Blaue Reiter," war mit Kandinsky gut bekannt und eng befreundet mit franz Marc, den er zum Praktikum in seinen Unterrecht einlud."

²¹² Burger, *Einführung in die moderne Kunst*, 130: "Marc ist die bezeichnendste Persönlichkeit für das Denken und Schaffen dieser jüngsten Generation in Deutschland."

Burger understands Kandinsky's aim as the complete emancipation of painting from "the object" and as bolstering the hope that painting would become akin to music, a pure expressive medium to communicate the inner spiritual experience of the artist. "[But] this romantic subjectivity [of Kandinsky's] runs into trouble," wrote Burger, "as it amounts to nothing more than a ecstasy of the eye, a dream-state, an incoherent babbling of disparate voices, a spiritualism in art that, like similar efforts, would benefit from being systematic."²¹³

It is imaginable that Kandinsky's attempt to philosophize out of his own work in *Über der Geistige in der Kunst* was less preferable than his art itself, as for Burger the project of the art historian was the systematic, though intuitive, divining of the artist's thought in the art work's appearance. The philosophical transmission of the work of art is, perhaps, not one that the artist can or should articulate conceptually or in language. Although Burger does not comment directly on whether the artist is wholly conscious of his *Weltanschauung* as it is folded into the work of art, the gulf that he insists upon, between the *Begrifflich* and the *Anschaulich* makes his mistrust of Kandinsky's forthright explications of color-effects more understandable. Despite the pessimistic view of Kandinsky's writing evident here, Burger remained admittedly in debt to the artist's book *Über die Geistige in der Kunst* and shared Kandinsky's conviction that a new epoch of great spirituality was imminent. For Burger, Kandinsky's theories of communicative color may not have been valid, but his work itself was evidence of this philosophical

²¹³ Burger, *Cézanne und Hodler*, 108: "Aber dieser romantische Subjektivismus läuft Gefahr, schließlich zu einer Extastase des Auges, einem Traumzustand, einem für alle unverständlichen Stammeln in abgerissenen Lauten, einem Spiritismus in der Kunst zu werden, er, gegenüber ähnlichen Bestrebungen, allerdings das eine Gute für sich hat, konsequent zu sein."

development of transcendental thought in painting.²¹⁴ Fundamentally, however, Burger found in the Expressionists a turn away from empiricism, and, in their subjectivity and their desire for expression [*Ausdrucksverlangen*] the after effects of “transcendental” thought as developed in German idealistic philosophy. Like Kandinsky, Burger was convinced that art served a purpose, that it should serve the development of the human spirit.²¹⁵ As recorded by Robert Hedicke in 1924, Burger attempted to work in empathy with the artist, to “think with the artist to understand the work” and “began writing art history from the standpoint of that vital, expressionist stream.”²¹⁶²¹⁷

The earliest record of a biographical connection between Burger and Kandinsky concerns Burger's visits to the artist in Murnau in the accompaniment of students between 1912 and 1914.²¹⁸ As Rolf Hauck has noted, both Kandinsky and Marc were interested in involving academics in the struggle for the acceptance of modern art; their solicitation of Woringer to be the publisher of their pamphlet against Vinnens, “Protest of German Artists” attests to this fact.²¹⁹ In 1913 Kandinsky was individually assaulted by the critic

²¹⁴ Müller-Lentrod, 75-76: “Er sieht in diesem subjektivistischen Ausdrucksverlangen des expressionistischen Künstlers (wie in gewisser Weise auch des Kunsthistorikers) die Nachwirkungen des in der deutschen Philosophie des Idealismus entwickelten “transzendentalen” Dekens, welches das menschliche Subjekt und dessen Ringer um Welterkenntnis in den Mittelpunkt stellt.”

²¹⁵ Ibid., “Der Künstler fragt nach der Bedeutung der Dinge, der Welt für sein Leben und einverleibt sie sich in seinem alles subjektivierenden Gestaltungsdrang. Wie Kandinsky ist Burger der Überzeugung, daß Kunst nicht zweckfrei ist, sondern der Entwicklung der menschlichen Seele dienen soll.” [The artist questions the meaning of the thing, of the [meaning of] the world for his life and assimilates himself to this desire for form. Like Kandinsky, Burger is convinced that art is not without purpose, but rather should serve the development of the human spirit.]

²¹⁶ Burger, *Cézanne und Hodler*, 11: “Man muss in der Kunst mit den Künstlerlern denken können...”

²¹⁷ Hedicke, 152: “Burger war auch expressionistischer Künstler und Gegenwartsmensch in seiner Gesamteinstellung und beginnt die Kunstgeschichte vom Standpunkt der lebenden expressionistischen Strömungen und von seinem eigenen Subjektivismus die gegenwartsrinen aus zu betrachten.”

²¹⁸ Burckhardt, *Kunstwissenschaft zwischen Fach-Berufsprofilierung*, 100.

²¹⁹ Hauck, 188. Carl Vinnens published the brochure entitled “Protest of German Artists” in 1911, published in Jena. This work was a diatribe against the privileging of French and “international elements” in Germany and was a collective (although largely pseudonymous) work produced by the conservative

Kurt K  chler in a pithily worded review of the artist's show at the Louis Bock Gallery in Hamburg. After a barrage of insults regarding the "charlatanry" of the new art and the aesthetic high-ground taken by its reactionaries, K  chler wrote that "we should be able to swiftly dispose with this Russian Kandinsky without a fuss."²²⁰ The editor of *Der Sturm*, Herwarth Walden, began to organize a petition against the critic and less than a month after K  chler's defamatory article and in March 1913, Burger also published an official response to K  chler in *Der Sturm* entitled, "For Kandinsky." In this article Burger's demand that the critic work from the object itself—to attempt to inhabit the logic of the artist—is consistent with his art historical method as he oriented it to the observation of the artist's world-view (*Weltanschauung*). He writes:

...Such criticism is only foolish and impudent slander written out of ignorance... the essence of criticism consists in moving oneself through the world of, or on the same ground as, those that they would criticize in order to be able to affirm or judge their ideas. In the aforementioned case this may be difficult, but the critic simply cannot be relieved of this self-evident obligation.²²¹

The support that Burger extended to Kandinsky in 1913 was evidently reciprocated. Having read Burger's book, *C  zanne und Hodler*, Kandinsky wrote to

artistic circle in Bremen, Jena and Munich. Tendencies towards abstraction were labeled as symptomatic of artistic decline, the authors charged German art dealers and museum directors alike with inflating the value of French art to the detriment of native artists. In the same year, a group of 75 gallery directors, writers, dealers and artists such as Beckmann, Kandinsky, Liebermann, and Macke published a reply to Vinnen entitled "Im Kampf um die Kunst – Die Antwort auf den Protest deutscher K  nstler" (Munich: Piper, 1911), Worringers contribution was his "Entwicklungsgeschichtliches zur modernen Kunst." See the reprint of *Kampf um die Kunst: und andere Schriften*, Theodor D  ubler, ed., (Darmstadt: Luchterhand, 1988).

²²⁰ See Kurt K  chler, *Hamburger Fremdenblatt*, (Hamburg: February 15, 1913): "...Bei Louis Bock & Sohn hat wieder einmal einer ungl  ckseligen Monomanen ausgestellt, die sich f  r die Propheten einer neuen Malkunst halten. Wir sind schon mehrfach mit guten   sthetischen Gr  nden gegen die unsinnige Theorie dieser Leute und gegen ihre ganze Pfuscherei zu Felde gezogen, da   wir heute diesen Russen Kandinsky rasch und ohne Aufregung erledigen k  nnen... ."

²²¹ Burger, "F  r Kandinsky," in *Der Sturm* 152/153 (March 1913): 288. "...da   eine solche "Kritik" nur eine d  rre und dumme Beschimpfung von Seiten des unverständes ist...das Wesen jeder Kritik besteht darin, da   man sich in der Welt oder auf dem Boden desjenigen bewegt, der kritisiert werden soll, um innerhalb seiner Ideen zuzustimmen, oder zu verurteilen. Das mag in vorliegenden Fall schwer sein, erh  bt aber die Kritik nicht von dieser selbstverst  ndlichen Verpflichtung."

Burger in the following spring, just before the outbreak of the first war: "your conception of the work of art as a piece of a world-conception is the most valuable idea that modern German art history possesses."²²² As another undated letter from the beginning of 1914 confirms, Kandinsky and Burger must have remained in contact as Burger appears to have been in friendly enough contact, by post and in person, to request a work from Kandinsky at a discounted price: "As promised, the first volume of my book on German painting should appear in a following delivery. I have read your book again once more and am also compelled by so many similar things ... I also have my heart set on owning a picture or two of yours, unfortunately my means are too narrow to even think of such things.... We have to talk about this together on Friday...."²²³ On March 24th 1914, Burger writes again, "Thank you so much for your friendly words in which you have accommodated my presumptuous request in such a gracious way. I can definitely acquire the watercolor that you would let me have as a favor for 100 marks..."²²⁴

Whether Burger ever acquired the watercolor or the other work mentioned in the letter is not known, although intellectual exchange between the two continued. As recorded in unpublished correspondence extant in Burger's estate, Kandinsky and Burger

²²² Müller-Lentrod, 69.

²²³ Burger, "Brief an Wassily Kandinsky" (without exact date), (Heidelberg: Estate of Fritz Burger, n.d.): "Anbei meine versprochene deutsche Malerei im ersten Band nebst den bisher erschienenen folgenden Lieferungen. Ich hab mit großen Interesse Ihr Buch nun noch mal gelesen und bin auf so viel Gemeinsames gestoßen... Mich lüstet so sehr danach ein oder zwei Bilder von Ihnen zu besitzen. Aber leider sind meine zu knapp, um hieran ernstlich denken zu können. Ich müsste mit Ihnen einmal besprchen, welche Summer hierbei so in Frage käme... Darüber müssen wir am Freitag miteinander sprechen." Quoted in, Rolf Hauck, *Fritz Burger 1877-1916*.

²²⁴ Burger, "Brief to Wassily Kandinsky from March 24th, 1914, Estate of Fritz Burger, quoted in Hauck, 191.: "...vielen dank für Ihr freundliches Schreiben,in dem Sie mir meinen unbescheidenen Wünschen entsprechend in so außerordentlich liebenswürdiger Weise entgegengekommen sind. Das Aquarell, kann ich wohl erwerben, das andere aber möchte ich nicht missen. Vielleicht lassen Sie mir bis zur Beendigung meiner Reise noch ein wenig Zeit, bis ich meine nächsten Auslagen u. Einnahmen wieder einmal überschlagen habe..."

along with the young Bosnian Dimitrije Mitrinović, began to write in the summer of 1914 of a “Pan-European Movement.” Mitrinović—described variously as a poet, philosopher, translator, revolutionary, mystic and general Kandinsky promoter—was taken with the writings and manifestos associated with the *Blaue Reiter* and in 1914 sought out contact with Kandinsky with the aim of creating an association of poets, writers, philosophers and painters described as a union of “the humanity of folk culture through all of Europe” [*Die Menschheit der Volkkultur durch ein Gesamteuropa*]. According to commentary made by Burger's daughter, Lili Fehrle-Burger, on the correspondence between Kandinsky and Mitrinović, the most pressing task for this group was to develop the “spiritual and moral groundwork for the coming collectivity of human culture.”²²⁵ Like so many artistic-philosophical endeavors of this generation, the correspondence between Kandinsky and Mitrinović and their plans for a “Friedensbund” (Freedom League) of cosmopolitan intellectuals is written with a hopeful and utopian conception of the impending war and the corresponding ability of an international action to aid in a “global revolution” of the spirit. This action, supported by the German writer Fritz Mauthner and the Munich-based publishing house Bruckmann, also drew the interest of French philosopher Henri Bergson and the sanskritist Paul Deussen, among others.²²⁶

²²⁵ Lili Fehrle-Burger, "Short commentary on the letters between W. Kandinsky and D. Mitrinovic from between the 1st and 14th of July, 1914." Estate of Fritz Burger (Heidelberg). Quoted in Hauck, 191. See also Hauck, 191, "Neben Chamberlain warben in Deutschland der Schriftsteller und Gesellschaftskritiker Fritz Mauthner im "Berliner Tageblatt" für diese Ideen; der Münchner Verlag Bruckmann unterstützte die Aktion; der berühmte Sanskritist Paul Deussen sowie der französische Philosoph Henri Bergson zeigten lebhaftes Interesse."

²²⁶ See, Ibid. Rolf Hauck also writes that "under the apparent influence of Houston Stewart Chamberlain, in the end a program for "Aryan Folk Culture and Humanity" was developed that had less to do with the later racist-biological interpretations of the post-WWI German epoch and instead spoke of "Aryan" as a collective title that would include all European peoples, including Jewish populations. Hauck, 191-192, footnote 23. "Unter dem offenbaren Einfluss von Houston Stewart Chamberlain wurde ein Programm für

In the spring and summer of 1914, Kandinsky mentions his plans with Mitronivić to Marc repeatedly, to which Marc may have responded with little interest.²²⁷

Correspondence evidences Kandinsky's and Mitrinovic's desire that Burger be involved in the projected international action. A letter from Kandinsky dated July 7, 1914 reads:

Mitronivić is planning a great international union—naturally without any official form—in some relation to meaningful people who live for the day but also have their concerns for the future ... Mitronivić has asked me to write you to ask for your assistance...and yes he knows exactly that you were rather critical of his lecture and already said to me two months ago, "We absolutely must have Professor Burger"... if you are at all interested in these things then a visit with Mitronivić would be a great pleasure.²²⁸

The content of the lecture mentioned by Kandinsky was not preserved, although Burger's criticism certainly becomes manifest shortly afterwards. It appears that he retained serious reservations about Mitrinovic's plans and withdrew from further

"Arische Volkskultur und Menschlichkeit" entwickelt, das allerdings wenig mit der rassitisch-biologischen Auslegung der späteren deutschen Epoche zu tun hatte, sondern von einem "arischen" Völkerverband sprach, dem alle europäischen Völker, einschließlich der jüdischen Bevölkerung angehören sollten." Hauck also lists a number of other names associated with the action but provides no further citation, he lists: the poet Theodor Däubler, Giovanni Papini, Maurice Maeterlinck, Demitri Mereschkowsky and Stanislaus Przybyszewski.

²²⁷ In a letter from Franz Marc to his wife dated March 27th, 1915 he writes "ich werde auch nie an etwas Ähnlichen (wie den Plänen von Mitronivić) wieder mitarbeiten, sondern möglichst allein Dinge "bilden." [I would also never continue to work on something like that [like the plants from Mitrinović], rather possibly "create" things alone.] Franz Marc, *Briefe aus dem Feld*, 51. For correspondence concerning the Bosnian writer between Marc and Kandinsky, see: Wassily Kandinsky and Franz Marc, *Briefwechsel / Mit Briefen von und an Gabriele Münter und Maria Marc* (Munich: Piper, 1983), 201, 202, 204, 251, 253. In a letter dated March 10th, 1914 Kandinsky writes to Marc:... "Ich möchte auch sehr gern, daß Sie Mitrinovic kennen lernen. Er kann dem B.R. [Blaue Reiter] sehr nützlich sein... Mitrinovic wird so ein gewaltiges Bild (in seinem Vortrage entwerfen), wie man es nicht oft erleben kann... Karten für Sie beide sind schon da. Sie werden mit Klees sitzen... Gestern war aber Mitrinovic hier... Er will Sie bitten, über die deutsche Malerei zu schreiben, wovon er mit Ihnen selbst sprechen wird. Ich... werde mich unausgesetzt freuen, wenn diese große Sache zu Stande kommt." [I would really like for you would to make the acquaintance of Mitrinovic. He could be very useful to the Blaue Reiter... he will outline such a powerful image in his speech, one that is not often witnessed... tickets for you both are already there. You will be sitting with the Klees... Yesterday Mitrinovic was here. I... would be ceaselessly pleased if these grand affairs are truly brought about.]

²²⁸ Wassily Kandinsky, "Letter to Fritz Burger, July 7th, 1914", Estate of Fritz Burger, "... (so) plant Mitrinovic einen großen internationalen Verband – natürlich ohne jede offizielle Form – der in irgendeiner Beziehung bedeutenden Menschen, die heute leben, aber für morgen sorgen... Mitrinovic bat mich, Ihnen zu schreiben um Sie um Ihre Mitarbeit zu bitten... Er weiß sehr genau, daß Sie sich ziemlich kritisch zu seinem Vortrag gestellt haben, und sagte mir schon vor 2 Monaten: "Dr. Burgen müßten wir bestimmt haben"... Wenn Sie sich für Einzelheiten interessieren, so machen Sie Mitrinovic durch Ihren Besuch ein großes Vergnügen." Quoted in Hauck, 191.

correspondence regarding the intended international “action.” In an unapologetically negative letter to Kandinsky on the 22nd of July 1914 he writes,

I have written to Mr. Mitrinovic. First and foremost, his actions seem to me both impractical and unappealing because at the very least they would only be detrimental for Germany. We do not want to carry out our work by ceasing discussion and immolating ourselves in a mass of pyrotechnics.²²⁹

Only weeks after this letter was written, war broke out with the assassination of the Austrian Archduke, and the Munich-based *Blaue Reiter* was stopped in its tracks. Kandinsky left Munich for Switzerland and then Paris while Mitrinovic found asylum in London. After the war's beginning, correspondence between Kandinsky and Burger ceases and Burger died in service shortly after his enlistment two years later.

The origin of Franz Marc and Fritz Burger's relationship has not appeared in the review of literature on either figure, although multiple sources published after 1970 mention their relationship.²³⁰ According to Rolf Hauck, a review of Burger's papers in Heidelberg and the letters and documents of Franz Marc revealed no written record left by either Burger or Marc that attests to collaborations, meetings or intellectual exchange. Likewise, in Burger's estate there are no references or mentions of travel, visits or his presence at Marc's Atelier in Singelsdorf or Ried.²³¹ According to Hauck, the origin of this possibly apocryphal personal connection between Marc and Burger is difficult to

²²⁹ Burger, "Letter to Wassily Kandinsky, July 22nd, 1914." Quoted in Hauck, 190: "Ich habe heute Herrn Mitrinovic geschrieben,. Zunächst einmal, da mir seine Wirksamkeit unpractisch und unsympathisch, weil sie sich zum mindesten für Deutschland nur schädlich erweisen würde. Wir wollen Arbeit leisten nicht durch Reden halten und ein Massenfeuerwerk abbrennen..."

²³⁰ It is possible that the origin of this apocryphal story regarding the acquaintance or close friendship of Marc and Burger originated with the exhibition mounted at the University of Heilberg in the summer of 1986 for the 70th anniversary of Burger's death. The historian Jens Kräubig gave an address at the exhibition, the text of which was used for this study as well as every other study or mention of Burger since 1986.

²³¹ Hauck, 194: "Es gibt weder Schriftverkehr bei Marc noch Burger, der auf ein enges freundliches Verhältnis, das sich in gemeinschaftlichen Aktivitäten, Begegnungen oder Gedankenaustausch hätten widerspiegeln müssen, Bezug nimmt."

isolate, but is repeated in the literature on Burger printed after his death. Either a relationship did exist but went unrecorded, or a relationship may have been inferred by following writers due to the enthusiasm with which Burger wrote of the artist's work or their proximity during Burger's active years in Munich.

In Burger's 1913 publication *Cézanne und Hodler*, Marc receives only a passing mention. Burger comments on the composition and color of the animal paintings, that Marc has used natural anatomy and color as contrasting elements but in order to underscore the connection and their essential affinity between the animal subjects and their surroundings.²³² In the posthumously published *Einführung in die Moderne Kunst*, however, Marc plays a much more significant role. Here Burger devotes several pages to Marc, particular to his work in the *Blaue Reiter* group:

Marc is most representative of this young generation of artists ... whose art gains ... a cosmic vitality. The extensive energy of the colors and forms gives his work a welling freshness and robust intensity when compared to Cézanne; the colors lose all material corporeality and take on the immense energy of a colossal and immaterial world.²³³

The tremendous impression that Marc's work made upon Burger is evident not only in this passage, but appears repeatedly in the latter's war-time letters and writings.²³⁴ Burger

²³² Fritz Burger, *Cézanne und Hodler*, 194: "Seine Tiere, die im Walde lagern, wollen zugleich Natur sein, ...Dieser sinnlichen Ähnlichkeitsrelation zuliebe muß hier notwendigerweise das im herkömmlichen Sinne anatomisch Perspektivische oder statisch Richtige geopfert werden, um dieses friedliche, idyllische Beieinander verwandter Wesenheiten zu schildern.... Bei solchen Absichten mußte Marc jede Farbe vermeiden, die unserem stabilen Vorstellungsbesitz von dem "charakteristischen Aussehen" der gegenständlichen Einzelheiten entspricht...Der Hirsch ist dort farbig von den Bäumen gar nicht unterschieden.."

²³³ Burger, *Einführung in die Moderne Kunst*, 131: "deren Gestalt zu einer kosmischen...Vitalität. Die extensive Energie seiner Farben und Formen gibt seiner Kunst gegenüber der Cézannes eine quellende Frische und robuste Stuarke; die Farbe verliert ihre materiale Körperlichkeit und wird zur gewaltigen Energie einer riesenhaften, aber immateriellen Welt."

²³⁴ In March of 1916 Burger writes to a friend, "...Heute sind 2 herrliche Bilder von Marc, Rehe im Wald und Waldlandschaften, eingetroffen, deren Studium mir sehr weiterhelfen wird!" "...Today two magnificent pictures from Marc have arrived, *Deer in the Forest* and *Forest Landscape*, their study will really help me along!" See Hauck, 183.

may have felt himself in very close connection with Marc, but evidence that they had any unmediated personal contact is not supported by primary literature.

Conclusion

We might return now to the question first posed at the beginning of this text, that is, what methodological principles are appropriate to art? In other words, how does the art historian, the art writer, remain in the *domain* of art? Though posed by Burger in 1913, this question seems no less pressing to contemporary art historians who would be loathe to consider themselves content with, “merely classifying [art] through specific categories as defined by biographies, epochs or the concept of style.”²³⁵ Although art history as a discipline has not jettisoned biography or stylistic categorization as methodological tools, it might be said that their strict implication does not produce the subtlest of analyses. As Burger seems to have surmised, it is not impossible or always inappropriate to approach works as historical documents when they remain far in the past. In this case, the historian has the necessary distance [*Abstand*] from which to view the work, the thought or mind [*Geist*] of a bygone era now has a describable (if never entirely knowable) form. The problem for Burger was how an art historian could begin to write about contemporary art; how interpretation begins, extends or retracts when the writer's own historic subjectivity is indistinguishable from that of the artist, the object. Here the thought of Hegel, of knowing-oneself-in-history, saturates Burger's writing and seems to have engendered his mistrust of the academy's disinterest in contemporary art. As Burger came to understand it, the position of historical self-reflexivity necessary for understanding contemporary art is also the starting point from which any historical inquiry must somehow begin. To

²³⁵ See footnote 1.

begin work with a consciousness of one's own contemporaneity is to work subjectively [*subjektivieren*] rather than attempting to work objectively [*objektivieren*].

Burger's search for an art historical methodology took him from the close observation of artistic method based on physical knowledge of painting technique all the way to an expressionist, literary and bombastic style of writing hardly recognizable as academic research [*Forschung*]. Thus his methodological trajectory also took him from hard facts to complete fiction. By moving in both directions, Burger's experimental methods seem to have indicated the limits of what his colleagues and contemporaries could consider *wissenschaftlich* [scholarly]—art historians should no more play with paint and clay than they should attempt poetic verse. In a sense, however, I would argue that both of these impulses have their origin in the same place: Burger's conviction that the art historian “must be able to think in the art with the artist” [*muss in der Kunst mit dem Künstler denken können*]. This other side of Burger's work is not removed from Hegelian thought insofar as it is also an attempt to be in one's own contemporary *Geist*. However these quasi-artistic explorations were also based on the re-conception of the work of art by the late 19th-century formalists such as Hildebrand and Fiedler, both of whom objected to any historical facts coming to bear on art interpretation. To Fiedler, the eidetic nature of art elides discursive writing, the work of art remains a poetic and, indeed, mysterious object whose existence as something given-to-see [*Sichtbarkeit*] also negated the usefulness of approaching it through linguistic, conceptual thinking. His pedagogical experiments in “studios” for art history students begs the question of tacit, not-conceptual knowledge: if you can draw a figure like Titian, do you now know what

Titan knew? This distinction, between the *anschaulich* and the *begrifflich*, is thoroughly Kantian, and one that persists among later generations of art historians.²³⁶

Certainly Burger's need to write and to feel as a mind of the contemporary age (now entering a terrible war) placed alongside his conviction that the art object contained a knowledge untranslatable from the visual to the conceptual did not make the task of writing about art any easier. Epistemologically he was on uncertain ground. Burger's temporary solution (he did not have long to formulate it) was to simply try to work intuitively; and it is precisely the phrase “intuitive research” that Albert Brinckmann chose to describe the method at work in *Einführung in die moderne Kunst*.²³⁷ In the *Einführung*, Burger's use of Nietzsche is not structural but sympathetic, for Burger he seems to be another writer speaking in the *Geist der Gegenwart*: impassioned, anti-rational and with similar disdain for the “schoolboy wisdom” of his own field. Inarguably Burger's belletristic prose was his attempt to feel, to intuit, rather than to think his way out of the work, a method that is only as reliable as the writer's intuitions remain good.

To say Burger rose to the challenges he posed in his books would be to ignore their obscurity in the field today. But to believe that the questions that haunted Burger are no longer of any importance to the discipline would be far more naïve. The role of intuition, the subjectivity of the writer, the bounds of scholarly knowledge, the use of theory and the intranslability of the art object should press us today as they pressed Burger—however formatively—one hundred years ago.

²³⁶ See Christopher Wood's description of Sedlmayer, Pächt and Kashnitz's methodologies in *The Vienna School Reader*, 1-51.

²³⁷ Albert Brinckmann, “Afterword,” in Fritz Burger, *Einführung in die Moderne Kunst*, 138.

Illustrations

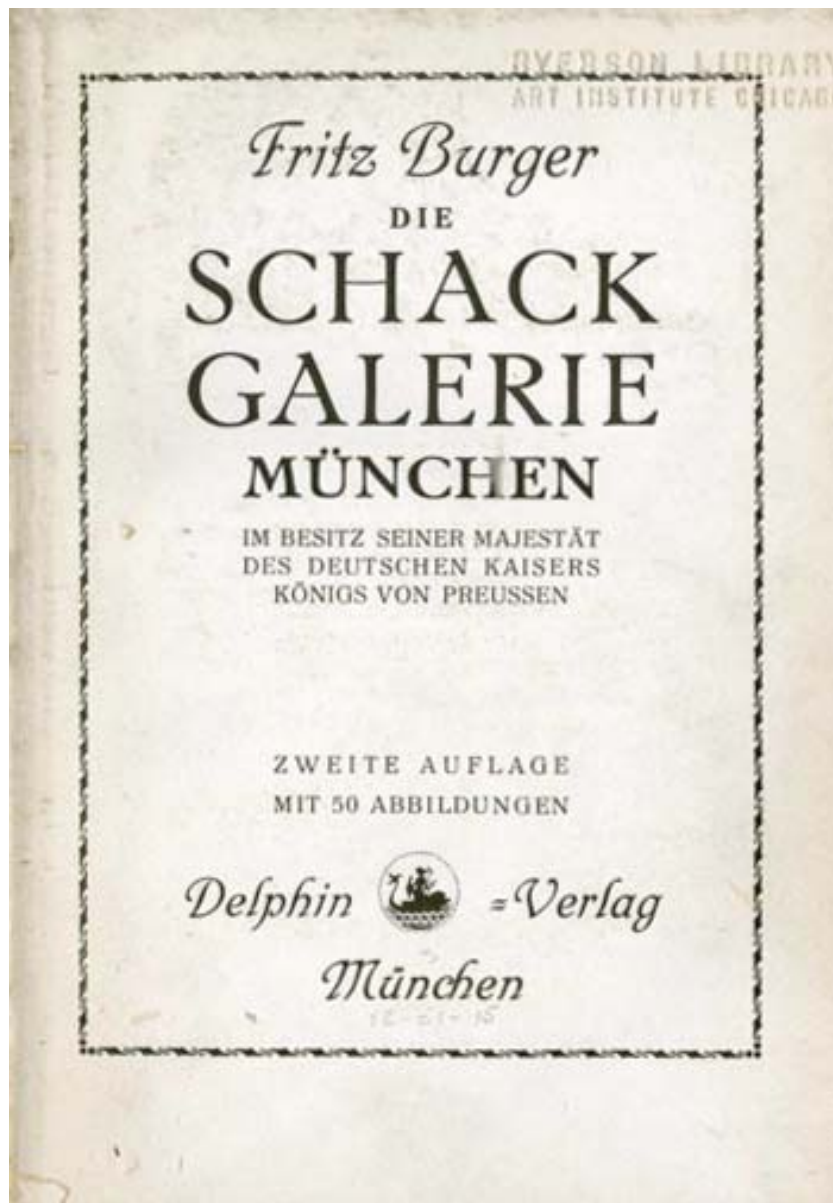


Figure 1.0: Fritz Burger. *The Schack Galerie München*. 1913. Printed material.
Photograph of the title page. Collection: Library System of the Art Institute of Chicago.



Figure 1.1: Fritz Burger. *Cézanne und Hodler: Einführung in die Probleme der Malerei der Gegenwart*. 1913. Printed material. Photograph of the title page. Collection: Library System of the University of Texas, Austin.



Figure 1.2: Fritz Burger. *Einführung in die Moderne Kunst*. 1917. Printed material. Photograph of the title page. Collection: Library System of the University of Texas, Austin.



Figure 1.3: *Photograph of Fritz Burger in his Studio*. 1914. Black and white Photograph.
Collection: Archives of the Maximilian University, Munich.



Figure 1.4: Arnold Böcklin. *Villa am Meer*. Oil on canvas. 1863. Collection: Neue Pinakothek, Munich.

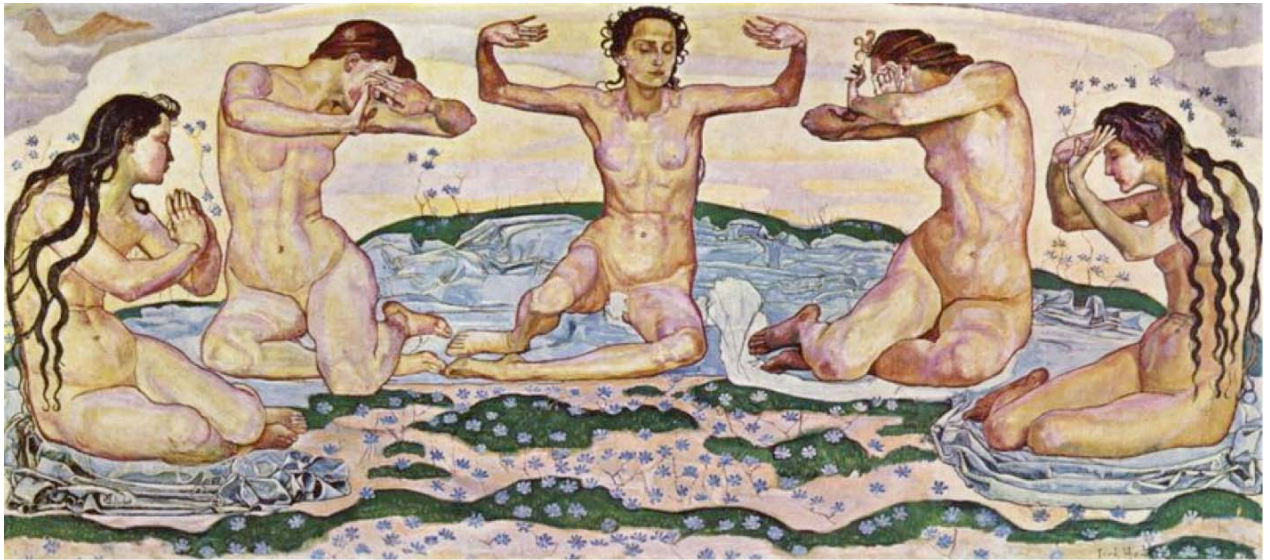


Figure 1.5: Ferdinand Hodler. *Der Tag*. 1900. Oil on canvas. 160 x 349 cm. Collection: Kunst Museum, Bern.

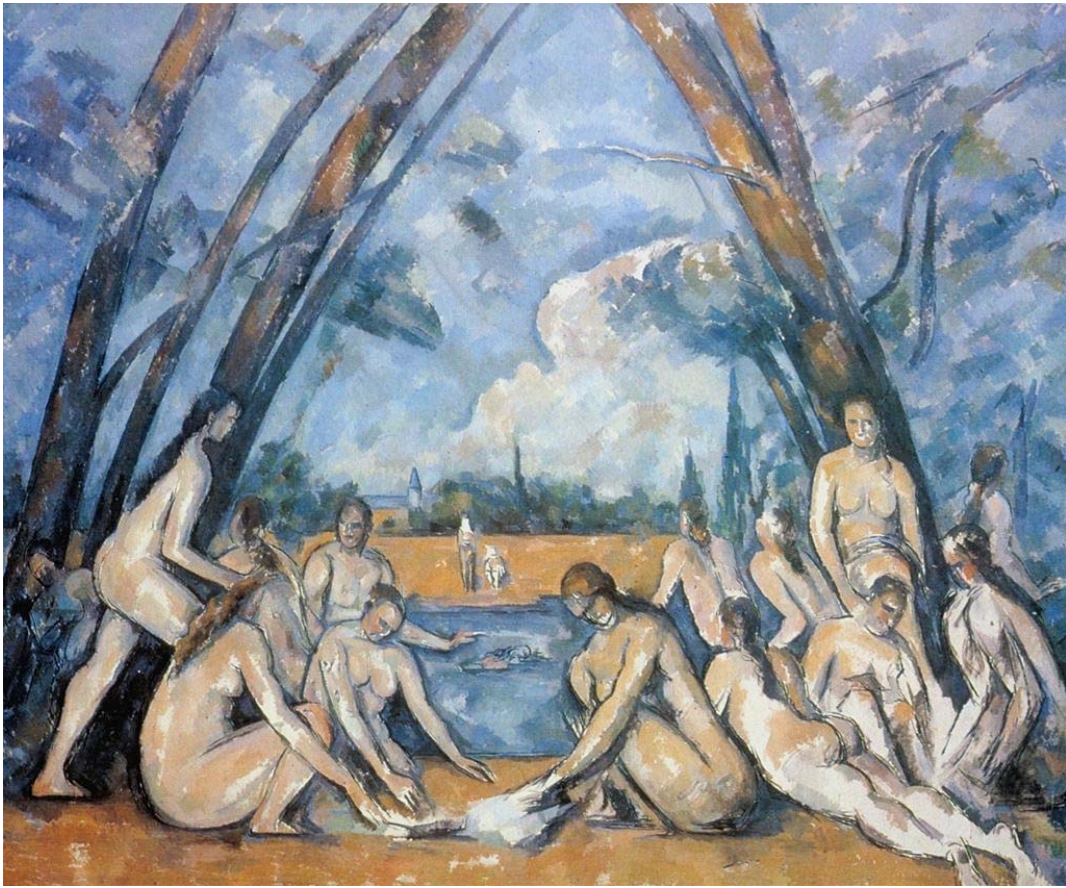


Figure 1.6: Paul Cézanne. *The Great Bathers*. 1898–1905. Oil on canvas. 208 x 252 cm.
Collection: Philadelphia Museum of Art.

alte zitternde Welt langsam mit der Macht ihres Wesens durchdringt. Aus unberechenbaren Launen des Schicksals gestaltet sich das Individuum und seine individuelle Form verkörpert das unpersönliche Gesetz der Ewigkeit.

Es wachsen aus wirbelndem Chaos kristallene Säulen und über tausend Brücken und Stegen formt sich ein neues Geschlecht seinen Tempel der Unendlichkeit. Da schweigt die plastische Bildkraft in der glitzernden Metamorphose alles Lebens, das Auge ordnet nicht mehr die Dinge zu klarer Unendlichkeit mit oben und unten, hinten und vorne (Abb. 16). Es wächst, steigt, fällt von einer Unendlichkeit in die andere und bleibt doch gebannt in die große starke Stille ewigen Gesetzes. Das Wort verstummt vor dem Klang der Seele. Es erfüllen sich die Worte des Propheten: „Was geschah mir, horch! Flog die Zeit wohl davon? Falle ich nicht? Fiel ich nicht — horch in dem Brunnen der Ewigkeit?... Siehe es gibt kein oben, kein unten! Wirf dich umher, hinaus, zurück du Leichter! Singe! Sprich nicht mehr... denn ich liebe dich o Ewigkeit“.



Abb. 16. Franz Marc, Wasserfall im Eis
(aus „Deutscher Herbstsalon“, Sturmverlag).

Figure 1.7: Fritz Burger, *Einführung in die Moderne Kunst*. 1917. Printed material.
Photograph of page 10. Collection: Library System of the University of Texas, Austin.



Abb. 8. Kandinsky: Holzschnitt (aus Kandinsky „Klänge“, Verlag R. Piper & Co.).

Da leuchtete langsam wieder die Welt des Wunders auf. Es kam Leben in jene Splitter und Trümmer versunkener Geschlechter, sie gebaren den Sturm und alles wankte, floh, stürzte und im chaotischen Getriebe tobte der Geist des neuen Lebens über dem Totenfelde des alten einher und doch sank dies Vergangene nicht in Nacht und Dunkel zurück, sondern durchdrungen von der Kraft des neuen Geistes wurde es neugeschaffener Teil jenes allerfüllenden Wesens, das das große Wunder kosmischen Lebens beschwor. Da klang die Stimme des Propheten wieder: „Das Meer stürmt: alles ist im Meere. Wohlan, wohlauf! Was Vaterland! Dorthin will unser Steuer, wo unser Kinderland ist! Dort hinaus, stürmischer als das Meer, stürmt unsere große Sehnsucht.“ Da fiel alle Hülle und Tand des Wissens, der das Auge umschmeichelte, man suchte und fand die Seele im Kinde, im Menschen, im Kosmos wieder, „die umfänglichste Seele, welche am weitesten in sich laufen und irren und schweifen kann, die notwendigste, welche sich aus Lust in den Zufall stürzt — die seiende Seele, welche ins Werden taucht, die habende, welche ins Wollen und Verlangen will, die sich selber fliehende, die sich selber im weitesten Kreise einholt.“

Zum neuen Leben wurde die Vergangenheit, zum Lebenswunder. Leiden und Freuden, Hoffen und Wünschen, Denken und Glauben der Gegenwart tönt im Echo zurück aus Jahrtausenden. Es ruhen die Geister, wach geworden zu tätigen Leben, es predigen die Geschlechter. Aus der Sinfliut unendlicher Gestaltenfülle formte sich feierlich und groß der neue Kosmos des Geistes.

Figure 1.8: Fritz Burger, *Einführung in die Moderne Kunst*. 1917. Printed material. Photograph of page 5. Collection: Library System of the University of Texas, Austin.



Abb. 5. Deutscher Holzschnitt, 15. Jahrhundert.

Weisheit und nur in den Fußtapfen ausgetretener Pfade einen Weg finden konnten.

Da stand ein Prophet auf und schrieb und predigte: „Lieber nichts wissen als vieles halb wissen! Lieber ein Narr auf eigene Faust, als ein Weiser nach fremdem Goutdünken! Ich gehe auf den Grund, was liegt daran, ob er groß oder klein ist? Ob er Sumpf oder Himmel heißt. . . . In der echten Wissenschaft gibt es nichts Großes und nichts Kleines.“ Und der Prophet sprach weiter: „Wer über alte Ursprünge weise wurde, siehe der wird zuletzt nach Quellen der Zukunft suchen und nach neuen Ursprüngen. . . O Brüder, es ist nicht über lange, da werden neue Völker entspringen und neue Quellen hinab in

Und in dieser Welt ließen sich etliche nieder und bauten aus dürftig kleinen Trümmern, die sie die Oberlieferung nannten, sich ihr neues Haus, in dem der Gott der Schönheit und der Weisheit wohnen sollte. Weise schriftgelehrte Männer wurden seine Priester und alles kam und lauschte ihren Lehren.

Da vergaß man die Welt des Wunders in den Trümmern ringsumher, denn diese Weisen erklärten und ordneten dies Leben nach Namen und nach Dingen. Deshalb starb über dieser behaglichen Ordnung das Leben, und alles wurde hart und starr. Arbeiter riefen sie, fleißige, genügsame, die trugen in einem Leben voll Mühsal und Entbehrung das Bündel der von ihnen gesammelten Weisheiten, und einer gab sie dem andern weiter, das Jahrhundert hindurch. Aber rückwärtssehend wußte keiner von ihnen, wohin vorwärts der Weg sie trug, Wissende, die blind und arm wurden unter der Last ihrer



Abb. 6. Deutscher Holzschnitt, 15. Jahrhundert.

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Figure 1.9: Fritz Burger, *Einführung in die Moderne Kunst*. 1917. Printed material. Photograph of page 3. Collection: Library System of the University of Texas, Austin.

Appendix

Translation:

Fritz Burger, *Einführung in die Moderne Kunst*. Berlin-Neubabelsberg: Athenaion, 1917, 1-23.

Foreword

Forewords are a necessary evil yet, for a history of the art of the 19th and 20th centuries, particularly necessary. This art touches upon the personal, that which is most personal. It impacts the world and life order of individuals. No one goes unpunished for that. For this reason, it is dangerous to write such books in which the material will not be handled according to the usual principles. One enters the fight. But should not a historian stand aside from the struggles of the opinions of the day? Does he not thereby run the risk of losing his academic “objectivity” if he participated in the struggle in some capacity? There are impartial books about the art of the 19th and 20th centuries. *Nomina sunt odiosa*. They offer only a castrated wisdom that is neither hated, nor loved, by anyone. This book loves what many hate and yet does not hate everything that they love. It is not written to be artistically partisan, but rather in spirit of the present. It may become “party and head of state” with regard to historical consideration of innovations and battles of the last century. Let this book show the youth their origins, their roots, their own ancestry. Its purpose is to serve the present. The more that this book truly belongs to the present, the younger it will stay.

Of course, the experts will still shake their heads in disapproval, since the historical distance necessary for a systematic [*wissenschaftlich*] consideration of contemporary art will always be lacking. The edifice of historical scholarship, of course, wants to measure the value of both artwork and artist based on their 'effects', on their significance for the development of art.

We agree with the youth, that in the final analysis, any such a narrative of development is based entirely on subjective interests and epistemological suppositions and belongs only to the obsolete and conveniently exploitable spiritual state of the present [*Geistesbestand der Gegenwart*]. Thus such a narrative is no less subjective than an artistic ideology that adopts the concerns and epistemological foundations of the present, entirely conscious of their world historical value [*weltgeschlichen Wertes*]. Conveying these values is a difficult task, especially since certain dogmatic perspectives informed by schoolboy logic must be combated in both experts and laymen alike. That, of course, has always been so with everything new. It is thus most appropriate to lend our ear to Goethe's Mephisto:

Here's how I recognize the learned man,
What you don't touch, for you lies miles away;
What you don't grasp, is wholly lost to you;
What you don't calculate, you believe untrue;
What you don't weigh, that has for you no weight;
What you don't coin, you're sure is counterfeit;
What you don't want doesn't count—or so you think,

The Introduction covers what modern art wants and its true [*innerlich*] significance. Yet some—partially polemical—things may be said here, in advance. Modern art inscribes itself with new symbols, new purposes in life, new laws for living.

Their relative incomprehensibility does speak against modern art or against the art of the past; at worst, it only speaks against the “Artistic Tradition” —a concept with a subjective and shifting meaning. Thus it can be said that every new artistic movement imparts new meaning to the “Artistic Tradition.” At least in part, this is where the work of this book begins. Conversely, it is misguided to call tradition as a witness against modernity. It is a fundamental error. Only when the symbols of the older generation no longer dully veil knowledge and have been partially eclipsed, will the new symbols become widely comprehensible for the public—and today they can expect to have greater impact than ever before on the nature of the “public.” This is particularly difficult for art theorists and historians who have already shaped a scholarly [*wissenschaftlichen*] epistemological model based on tradition, and who, whenever their basic concepts of art objective analysis no longer suffice, speak naively of “non-art” or unscientific approaches, for the sake of convenience.

A word should be said here regarding the method according to which art is considered [*Kunstabetrachtung*] in the following. It adapts itself to the material being discussed and, contrary to the predominant methodologies for artistic analysis [*Kunstabetrachtung*], is not indebted to a formalistic-rationalistic aesthetic but rather is formal in nature. It is not the formal mastery of a spatial or figural problem that provides the basis of an artistic judgment, but the form of artistic thinking, i.e. of imagining, within the realm of color and space [*Farbig-Räumlichen*]. The form will be considered insofar as it is the visible realization of specific ideational content [*Denkinhalte*] and not merely as a means for the spatial realization of a sensible idea [*Vorstellung*]. The objective

[*wissenschaftlich*] approach is entirely based on transcendental epistemology. That is not to say that art should be a matter for philosophy, rather only to say something regarding the means and foundation of the objective epistemology applied here. Of course, any adamant insistence [*eisernen Bestand*] on our own judgments must be relinquished. For example, the words “can,” “right” and “wrong” have no place in a judgment, in which we have to do with static forms [*Gesichtsvorstellungen*] and their ideational [*geistige*] content, expressed by formal relationships. Hence, it must immediately be said that forming “thoughts” in art does not at all mean pursuing a “reflective,” self-conscious art [*reflektierende Gedankenkunst*]. It is much more the question of whether these thoughts can preserve their “ideality” through the artistic motif. To make thoughts sensible does mean to materialize them.

Books of this sort necessarily have a programmatic character that should not be confused with a tendentious one. For this reason, our relationship to the art of the past must be clarified in a longer section, because the problems with which modern art confronts us compel us to account for what art actually is, to account for the old art—not in order to dismiss it, but rather precisely because of its relationship to the present. The origin of modern art can only be found if the concept of art history is extended beyond familiar European material, in the pursuit of a true history of the art of the world. To my thinking, this is the source of the most crucial fundamental error of the brilliant introduction to Meier-Graefe’s history of 19th-century painting. There, the Renaissance still predominates as the precursor of modernity, the question of Nordic thought is barely touched upon, oriental art is entirely overlooked—although this latter has formed the

foundation of the former, at least in part, and the former has provided the most important foundation for modernity. The new art is an affair of the Nordic peoples. The Gothic and the Modern more closely link Romanesque France to Germanic Germany [*germanisches Deutschland*] than to Romanesque Italy. For this reason, we cannot create an isolated artistic and psychological basis of judgment through questions of race and nationality alone. The same is true of aesthetic catchwords such as “Impressionism.” Meier-Graefe's history of painting suffers in that it is written excessively from the perspective of French painting and so-called “Impressionism” reducing Germany to a merely provincial standing and completely neglecting the historical fact that Germany and her art played a leading role in the modern art movement. The enchanting conflagration of war establishes the bloody world-historical background for its new national prominence and new world-historical mission. The privation and prevailing characteristic of the time require new and deeply resonating symbols, after a general retreat. Therefore, a German book should be a fair-minded matter and the history of art should be practiced, not from a German, but more than ever before, from a world historical standpoint. The German spirit will drag [*ziehen*] its inherited and ennobled symbols with cords [*Fäden*] of reconciliation over the freshly dug graves. And, as at the beginning of the century, with Beethoven's “Be Embraced, Millions,” today that [the German spirit] will shout out to all the peoples of the world, stronger, firmer and prouder, the slogan of the new age: the community of mankind. [*Menschheitsgemeinschaft*].

Chapter I: The Style and Spirit of the 19th and 20th Centuries

O my brothers, what I can love in man is that he is a transition and a downfall.

- Nietzsche's Zarathustra

One day we will be able to tell the children of later generations the fables of the significance and essence of the present, of a race [*Geschlecht*] that wanted to elevate itself above heaven and earth, but lost sight of the paradise of earthly glory through the sober symbols of rationality; [a race] that saw the waves of the universe rush past and nevertheless stood like an outcast, penitent before the infinitude of spirit. “Where is my home?” cried Zarathustra: “I have asked about it and searched—I search still, yet I have not found it.. Oh eternal everywhere, oh eternal nowhere, oh eternal nothingness!” Stepping towards the border of eternity, [the spirit] saw itself drifting, without will, without purpose, without sense, as in the current of a stream. Lonely, within a great and unknown power, as a lonely and idiotic spectator, in a lonely and idiotic crowd.

She was threatened with sinking into this expanse, this immensity, in which everything appeared so naked and so cold, like herself. Freezing, she longed for the warm light of life and before the gates of eternity, starving gazes turned towards the new, great and expansive home of the human spirit.

Who warms me, who still loves me?
Give hot hands!
... give me, the Loneliest...
My last and only companion
My great enemy

My stranger
My executioner-god!

And many of this raced moved on, to seek out this new homeland of the human spirit. They wandered along a wide, dark path, led past the towering ruins of sunken and sinking worlds, which laid, like defiant, massive splinters, like unordered masses, like giants and dwarves: austere, nameless, meaningless, looming [*ragend*], raging, staggering, still tumbling yet already dead, torn bodies lost in the unknown, rent from the powerful shadow of death and bleached in the still light of nothingness.

And some settled in this world, building for themselves a new house using the meager ruins that they called tradition [*Überlieferung*], in which the god of beauty and wisdom was to live. Wise men of letters [*schriftgelehrte Männer*] became its priests and all came to listen to their teachings.

The people there forgot the miraculous world in the surrounding ruins because those wise men defined and ordered this life according to names and according to things. Thus life died for this comfortable order and everything became stiff and rigid. They called for workers, diligent and modest, who despite a life of hardship and privation, carried the bundle of the wisdom they had collected, passing it along from one to the next, over the course of the century. But as they looked only backwards, not one of them knew where the path ahead would lead; people of knowledge became poor and blind under the burden of their wisdom and who could only find their way by following the footprints left along the beaten path.

A prophet raised himself up, and wrote and preached, “Better to know nothing at all than many partial truths! Better a fool for one's self, than a wise man of another's

discretion! I am getting to the cause [of things], what does it matter if it is big or small? If it is called a swamp or heaven... In the pursuit of knowledge, there is nothing large and nothing small.” And the Prophet spoke further, “Behold, he who has grown wise concerning old origins, will ultimately seek the springs of the future and new origins. Oh brothers, it is not long until a new people shall arise and new springs shall rush down into new depths. For the earthquake buries many wells, creates such thirst, exposes the inner powers and secrets to the light. The earthquake reveals new wellsprings. In the earthquake of old peoples, new fountains burst forth.”

There came a large and young flock, sturdy, with a holy belief in a higher power, one that lives in and with them, leading them together, bestowing victory and power onto them. They carried the divine promise with them and blew the trumpets of judgment anew. And the walls burst, within which the Philistines, in lush contentment, had isolated their smaller world from the world outside, caring nothing for those who languished and starved for the free, white light of the spirit. Then “the wise rejoiced once more in their folly, and the poor in their riches.” And a voice asked “Why shouldn't nature, mute and solicitous, which is nothing but lived life and life desirous of resurrection, impatient with the cold looks you cast, not pull you in at odd hours and how you, that it also has holy grottoes in its depths, within which you can be one with yourself, you who were estranged from yourself while outside?”

The miraculous world slowly began to glow again. Life came once more into those races, smashed and sunken in ruin. They unleashed the storm and everything staggered, fled, and collapsed, amidst the chaotic commotion, the spirit of the new life

raged over the grave of [spirit of the] old life, and yet the past did not sink back into night and darkness. Instead, filled with the power of the new spirit, it became a newly created part of that all-embracing essence, conjuring up the great miracle of cosmic life. The voice of the prophet rang out again, “The sea stormeth: all is in the sea. Now then, all's well! What of fatherland! Our rudder has set course for the country of our childhood! And there, beyond, stormier than the sea, storms our great longing.” There all the pretense [*Hülle*] and trumpery of knowledge that had flattered the eye fell away,, and the people sought and rediscovered the soul in the child, in the human being, in the cosmos. “The most expansive soul, that can run and stray and rove furthest into itself, the most necessary [*notwendigste*] soul, plunging itself for pleasure into contingency—the soul in Being, that plunges into Becoming, the possessing soul, seeking to attain desire and longing; the soul fleeing from itself, overtaking itself in the widest circuit.”

The past became the new life, it became a miracle of life. [*Lebenswunder*]. The sufferings and joys, hopes and wishes, the thoughts and beliefs of the present resound in an echo out of the millennia. The races preach that the spirits call, awakened to the active life. The new cosmos of the spirit, solemn and dignified, arose from out of the deluge of the infinite multiplicity of forms.

Liberated from the weight of extrinsic knowledge there came a radiance, a ringing out into the cosmos all around. The mountains evaporated into a floating cloud, the cloud solidified into a mountain, and the meadow becomes a shimmering mirror through which the light of the heavens carries knowledge from one eternity to the next [*durch den das Licht des Himmels von einer Unendlichkeit in die andere die Kunde trägt*]. Forces steam

and rise from unknown depths, a brilliance shines from unknown heights and a ferocity [*Wildheit*] circles in the eternal storm, the great storms onto the fleeingsmall. The masses struggle for air and space, the silence commands, the black shadows threaten, vanquish, and annihilate. The strong and growing light prevails and triumphs, and for eternal reasons [*aus ewigen Gründen*], the bodies stretch themselves out, and, like giants, rise towards the trembling heaven. The colors riot, wail, dream and tremble, fading into the ether. The lines sigh, hate, fight, sink and stiffen, like the paths of stars, floating and falling [*verfließend*] out of eternity. The anxious narrowness of life dies and the earth becomes a star-sparkle [*Sternengefunkel*], becomes a flaming fabric, the brilliant morning of the world's creation. The corporeal and all flesh sinks down before the originary power and purpose of Being; in the twilight of the gods of the past, the spiritual element of the soul celebrates a great resurrection. Once more, the human race mirrors the wonder of its existence in the cosmos and feels at one with the eternal power that created the mountains at the beginning of time: humanity now lives a new cosmic life, praying to the spirit of creation in the creatingand volition of its own spirit. And the Discerning One shall learn to build with mountains! The prophet cried, "It is but a small thing for the spirit to move mountains, did you know that already?"

The people came to abhor the body, because in it they saw only the embodiment of the spirit: its drama, its secret, its enigmatic greatness, its proud order [*Gesetzlichkeit*], as well as its capricious unpredictability. The body lost the fleshliness of its existence [*Dasein*], people learned to construct it out of mountains because the body was the son, and now the ruler over the power that created the mountains at the beginning of time. The

people learned to give form to the terrifying abyss, worshipped the cold energy of death as it became silent, its mighty, spectral blaze, the frightfulness of the fearless, the gruesome loneliness of a raceless being's timeless desire turned in upon itself [*die Furchbarkeit des Furchtlosen, die grauenhafte Einsamkeit eines zeitlosen in sich gekehrten Willens geschlechtsloser Wesen*]. The substance of human life disappears in the severe regularity of the cosmos, becomes a colossus in the realm of the colossal. Humanity worships the sublime silence and the majestic greatness of that existing beyond good and evil in the proud bondage of its power, marvels at, and constructs that enormous reserve of spiritual energy, the fanaticism and visionary power of the disciplined will, the pain of discernment, the pain of everlasting birth. The human form speaks of the cosmic within humanity, of the persecuting storm of the eternal passions of an aimless spirit, a thousand times splintered and fragmented, like the whipped furies raging in the forms, the whole human being, shattered by nerves, skittish, flashing, flaming, maniacal. Flaming up to a primal scream, fleeing into dissolution, catching up into the infinite vortex all wickedness and deceit, all childish goodness, in the dizzying change of growth. Beyond the ephemeral desires of the will of a single personality, one can see in the bizarre branching [*verästelt*] structure of finite human corporeality only the self-fulfillment of an eternal spirit and in it, the causal principle of both the small and the great, of hatred and love, of law and freedom. From the rising sun of this people shines forth not the pleasing light of flattering beauty but rather the martial power that compels the restless, ruptured cosmos to veiled unity.

The power that grows, prevailing beyond the darkness and out of the depths and slowly penetrates the old, trembling world with the power of its being. The individual forms itself from the unpredictable moods of fate and his individual form embodies the impersonal law of eternity.

Crystalline columns emerge from the whirling chaos and a new people builds its temple to eternity over a thousand bridges and walkways. The sculptural force of the image remains silent in the face of the glittering metamorphosis of all life, the eye no longer orders things within a clear conception of infinity with above and below, backwards and forwards. It grows, ascends and falls from one eternity to the next and yet remains spellbound by the great and powerful silence of everlasting law. The word falls silent before the sound of the soul. The words of the prophet are fulfilled, “What has befallen me, hark! Has time flown away? Do I not fall? Did I not fall—hark—into the well of eternity? ...B there is no above and no below! Throw yourself about, outward, backward, you light one! Sing! Speak no more... because I love you, oh eternity.”

Jacob Burckhardt said of the 19th century that it had to recite the tasks of the past once again. A harsh judgment, interlaced with the ironic smile of the expert, who, carried by the genius of better times, looks down almost sympathetically on the schoolboy wisdom of the present. The judgment appears appropriate to whoever hazards a quick glance: peoples changed the traditional “styles” like robes that are donned and as quickly set aside. The Greek temples, the Gothic cathedrals, the castles of the Northern Renaissance and the Baroque supply a constantly changing exemplar; one sees the

capricious succession of styles and in vain questions regarding the style of the time. Time imposes this question on itself. For a long while, time's inability to answer this question was its deepest sorrow. The present has adopted a different view, since the dogmatic nature of the concept [of style] has been revealed and the insight has currency that 'style' does not refer to a narrow, artistic program, but rather, is an expression of destiny, of an ordering principle in whose eternal metamorphosis the intellectual development [*Geistesentwicklung*] of humanity finds expression.

The interests and tasks of the 19th century were not those belonging to times past. It was as though humanity drew a deep breath before the most triumphant accomplishments of its spirit. The 19th century became aware of this work of a thousand years. Before [this process] took its most important and consequential step, it looked back to examine itself and its accomplishments. At that time, people became comfortable conceiving of themselves as both children and heirs of the past and endeavored to take the thought and works of the past into their own conscious, interior possession. It was important to make this heritage fruitful so that the work of past peoples would not be in vain. This was the laborious task that a new time set for itself.

The people of the Middle Ages, like those of the Renaissance, also looked back, although for both there was only a temporally-limited inventory of culture and arts: the world of the Greeks, a the source for the enrichment of their own powers of imagination. The 19th century looked back on everything Europe had achieved over the last millennium and sought to identify what was shared and eternal. Guided by the discoveries of natural science one saw in the inheritance of the past not only something

that was there, but something that had become what it was. It was important to anchor the sense and purpose of this process of becoming in a universal history to render the doctrines [*Lehren*] of the development of ancient humanity useful in the unfolding of a new humanity.

The content and system of this worldview generally provides a natural explanation for what has been included in the traditional canon of art, and the manner of its organization. Almost from the beginning, one sought to identify *the general basis of style*, and of artistic creation itself, using *elementary and shared ideas* of style. Thus one built not upon an eclectic academic idea of style found in the art of Bologna in the 17th century, but rather upon a conception of the essence of artistic spirit [*Geist*], which found its justification in the work of criticism. What was desired was to account—using a methodology both rational and generic—for styles based on a universal basic causal formula of the artistic spirit, whereby the basic formula was thought to lie more in one style or another according to the particular content of the researcher's own thought. Hence the change of style-types. In this case also, it was attempted to account for the individual quality of style—using a methodology both rational and genetic—as being derived from a comprehensive and causal base formula of artistic spirit and accordingly the people of a given time identified the basic formula alternatively in this or that style, in accordance with the manner in which they thought at that time—no seems to be referring to the individual critics of art [*kritizistisch*].

Beyond what admittedly often amounted to pitiable findings stands a final historical answer: “Style” is the sensible expression of the laws of thought of the human

spirit and it is therefore the formalized expression of the nature and system of life that are conveyed through the artwork by the artistic personality. The value [of art] lies in this, not in its external aesthetic program. The early [period of] feeble skepticism was only an episode that marked the beginning of a new time. Ingrès asked, “Is there anything new? Everything has always been there; everything has already been done. Our task is not to invent new things, but to cherish and carry on a tradition;” even then, German artist Philip Otto Runge opposed the strong idealism of a self-confident young future to the mere nobility of a great artistic tradition. “Concerning my departure from the ordinary path, [*ordentlichen Wege*], I must, to the consternation of traditional people, confess that this departure must become even more radical. I feel most certain that the elements of art are only satisfied within the elements themselves and that they must be sought there once again; the elements themselves are in us, and therefore, everything should and must proceed from inside of us.” For this reason, even the forms of the past no longer require the commemoration of a grand ancestry, since modern subjectivism has made them into a component of its own delicate soul and has transfigured its spiritual/intellectual content into a new artistic unity. The beginning and end of the 19th century thus each reach out to shake the other's hand, as it were.

The seeking out of elementary principles in all of the world's goings on, the penchant for systematization in all areas of thought and creation [*Gestalten*] has been the distinguishing characteristic of the spirit of the century. On the elemental foundation of all thought, Kant—with sobriety, clarity and simplicity—erects a rock-hard closed system of thought. In the rational regularity of its basic forms, he finds the primordial form of

truth in which the essence of humanity, freed from all historical notions, recognizes itself as a mirror of the cosmos.

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